

# SENTINEL

vol.ccxlix, no. 2 • February 2024

*Beloved congregation,*

We know that with God, for everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven. I am deeply grateful for my season of ministry with you as your Senior Minister. As I have recently reached the mandatory retirement age of 72, I will retire June 30th at the end of this appointment year. Our bishop and Cabinet have been aware of this and are already in discussion with our Staff-Parish Relations Committee about our dreams and vision for our next Senior Minister. I am confident that a beautiful season of new life and growth lies before us and that the mission and ministries of FUMC will continue to thrive. Over these next months, we will have many opportunities to reminisce, give thanks, and dream together.

*With thanks,*

**Rev. Patricia Farris, Senior Minister**



Stay after worship on Sunday, February 11, for a **Question and Answer session with Rev. Patricia Farris about her retirement.** Dick Crawford, Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chair, will be on-hand to answer questions, as well as other members of SPRC.

*Childcare provided.*

**Sunday, February 11, 11 a.m.  
in Simkins Hall**

## HORIZONS

By Rev. Patricia Farris

**LENT 2024: Deeper Roots; Wide-spreading Branches**  
***May Spring come to us, be in us, and recreate new life in us!***

The season of Lent starts early this year. This forty-day season of preparing our hearts for the amazing good news of the Resurrection begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14. The word “Lent” comes from the Old English word “lencten,” which means “lengthen” and “Spring.” As the days grow longer, signs of Spring begin to emerge: longer and warmer days, birdsong, tender shoots of green and budding flowers. It’s as if all creation is preparing for new life, rejoicing all together in the promise of God’s ever-growing and ever-regenerating love.

This imagery will be familiar to all you gardeners, and maybe to those of us whose grandparents and great-grandparents were farmers. Watch for special Lenten activities at church—visiting gardens, including “The Farm,” a project of Upward Bound House; view photographs by Emily Payne in the Fireside Room; take a small plumeria cutting from our beautiful tree to grow your own. Listen for music that sings these themes: “In the bulb, there is a flower, in the seed an apple tree, in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter, there’s a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.”

deeper roots;  
wide-spreading branches



may Spring come to us; be in us;  
and recreate new life in us!

As we journey together through Lent towards the great day of Easter this year, we will be drawing on Celtic prayers in our worship. They are ripe with images of God’s renewing love in all creation. Here’s one from *Celtic Treasure* by J. Philip Newell:

*For rest in the night and the day’s busyness,  
for the silence of the winter earth  
followed by spring’s energy and summer’s fruiting,  
thanks be to you, O God.  
In the patterns of the seasons,  
in the rhythm of our days,  
show us the stillness that renews life,  
the letting go that deepens our strength of soul.*

May your soul be a garden of growth and delight this Lent.  
Our God is making all things new!



## WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

We worship on Sundays at 10 a.m. in-person in the Sanctuary each week. Masks are optional, but always acceptable and welcome. If you feel ill, please choose to worship from home online.



## COMMUNION SUNDAYS

**Char Smith** will bake the Communion bread for Holy Communion Sunday. **Berneice Southcott** prepares the Communion elements before worship, with the help of Congregation Care Associate **Anne Premer**. **Mary Crawford** and **Rose Kujawa** help take care of the elements after worship. Thank you all for your service!

## 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:

- **Website:** [www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream)

After worship: [www.santamonicaumc.org/sunday-service-archive](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/sunday-service-archive)

- **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc/live](http://www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc/live)
- **YouTube Channel:** [@SantaMonicaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/@SantaMonicaUMC)
- **The First UMC App:** (download from the App Store, search FirstUMC\_SM)

Let us know if you need assistance in joining online.

## OPEN SPACE YOUNG ADULTS

A place of community for “youngish” adults (loosely in your 20’s, 30’s... even 40’s!). We seek to journey alongside one another in spiritual discovery, growth, and belonging. We gather monthly for conversations and connection.

**February meeting:**  
**February 21, 7 p.m.**  
**off-site**



*The Open Space  
January Meet-up  
at Vito's Pizza*

# FEBRUARY ON-GOING MINISTRIES

- **Men’s Bible Study** Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom
- **Open Space Young Adults** Feb 21, 7 p.m.
- **Listening Hearts Women’s Group** Feb 7 & 21, Coffee and Connect: 10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd, LA, CA 90025 ); Feb 28, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom
- **Prayer Quilt Ministry** Third Saturday of the month: Meeting Feb 17, Room 300
- **The Chancel Choir** Rehearsals on Thursdays 7:40 p.m. in the Choir Room
- **Blood Pressure Screenings** Sunday, Feb 25, after worship in the Fireside Room
- **Nursery Care** Sundays: 9:30 - 11 a.m. Room 204
- **Sunday School for Kids** Sundays, 10 a.m. in Room 206, for ages 2 and up.
- **UMYF Youth Group** Meets on Sundays, 6-8 p.m. Youth Lounge

For more information on all of these programs, go to [www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org)

## LISTENING HEARTS WOMEN’S GROUP

Listening Hearts is a group for women of all ages, grounded in the practices of sacred listening, prayer and reflection. We gather both in person and online. We meet for coffee and community at Literati Cafe on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, and we also gather on Zoom for meditation and prayer, a topic for discussion, and sharing with one another on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. All are welcome to join! Contact Tricia Guerrero to learn more:

[t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org)

**February Meetings:** Feb 7 & 21, Coffee and Connect: 10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd, LA CA 90025); Feb 28, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

## YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Group meets weekly, and is open to all 6th - 12th graders in the community. They gather on Sunday evenings in the Youth Lounge for dinner, games and a program or topic for discussion and reflection.

**February Meetings:** Feb 4, 6 - 8 p.m., Feb 11, 3 - 7 p.m., Feb 18, 6 - 8 p.m. no meeting 2/25

## BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

The Health Ministry Council hosts Blood Pressure screenings once month. We are grateful to this ministry for their continued care of the congregation!



**Sunday, February 25, after worship in the Fireside Room**

## FEBRUARY AT-A-GLANCE

- Fri Feb 2** - Labyrinth/Chapel open  
- Kids Night Out (*registration is full*)
- Sun Feb 4** - Holy Communion
- Thurs Feb 8** - Preschool Lunar New Year
- Sun Feb 11** - Q & A with Rev. Patricia Farris about her retirement with SPRC  
- Lenten Devotional available
- Wed Feb 14** - **Ash Wednesday**  
**2 services: 12 p.m. and 7 p.m. Chapel**
- Sat Feb 17** - Prayer Quilt Workparty
- Sun Feb 18** - **First Sunday in Lent**  
- Emily Payne exhibit begins in the Fireside Room  
- Fraud and Scam Prevention talk with Wise and Healthy Aging
- Mon Feb 19** - Presidents Day *church campus closed*
- Tues Feb 20** - Rev. Keri Olsen Paget Lenten Study begins on Zoom
- Wed Feb 21** - February Mid-Week Recital  
- Rev. Larry's Lenten Bible Study begins on Zoom
- Sun Feb 25** - **Second Sunday in Lent**/ Moments for Mission: Claremont School of Theology  
- Blood Pressure Screenings  
*Off-campus:*  
- Home Run for Kids  
- Claremont School of Theology Day at Westwood UMC "Reigniting our Future"

### WALK THE LABYRINTH & CHAPEL OPEN FOR PRAYERS

The Labyrinth is open every first Friday of the month from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., in Simkins Hall. If you've never walked the Labyrinth before, there are printed instructions to help with your walking meditation. For those unable to walk, we have finger labyrinths. The First UMC Chapel will also be open for prayers.

**Friday, February 2, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Simkins Hall and the Chapel**

### Q & A WITH REV. PATRICIA FARRIS REGARDING HER RETIREMENT

Stay during coffee hour on Sunday, February 11, for a Question and Answer session with Rev. Patricia Farris about her retirement. Dick Crawford, Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chair, will be on-hand to answer questions, as well as other members of SPRC.

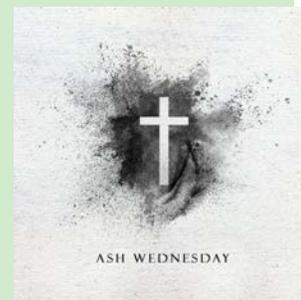
*Childcare provided.*

**Sunday, February 11, 11 a.m. in Simkins Hall**

## ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent - a time of introspection and self-examination of our lives and relationship with God. The ritual of the ashes represent a visual reminder of the day as we pause to remember our physical limits in contrast to the infinity of God. Here at First UMC, we offer two Ash Wednesday services in the Chapel (*in-person only*). The ashes used for the services come from the burned palms of last year's Palm Sunday Service. We invite you to this intimate and reflective service that marks the beginning of the Lenten season.

**February 14, 12 p.m. & 7 p.m., in the Chapel**



## LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

The Spiritual Formation Council invites you to read your Lenten Devotional online and in print. The devotional is written by the First UMC congregation and provides a wonderful opportunity to share Lent with family and friends. This year's theme is ***Deeper Roots, Wide-spreading Branches; May Spring come to us, be in us, and recreate new life in us!*** Printed copies will be available at church and in the church office, and daily emails begin on Ash Wednesday.

To sign up for the emails call the church office, or online at: [www.https://santamonicaumc.org/lent/](http://www.https://santamonicaumc.org/lent/)

### A PLUMERIA CUTTING GIFT FROM THE COURTYARD PLUMERIA

A number of plumeria branches will be available each week of Lent during worship hour in the Narthex.



### SMARTER THAN A SCAMMER - SCAM AND FRAUD SELF-DEFENSE WORKSHOP

Please join Miles McNeeley, LCSW from Wise & Healthy Aging, in an interactive discussion on scams and fraud. This workshop will help participants to identify scams, report instances of fraud to law enforcement, and learn tools to help combat scammers. This discussion will include a question and answer session to address participant's concerns.

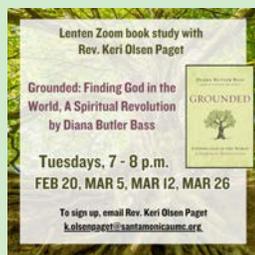


**Sunday, February 18, after worship in the Fireside Room**

## LENTEN BOOK STUDIES: TWO OPPORTUNITIES

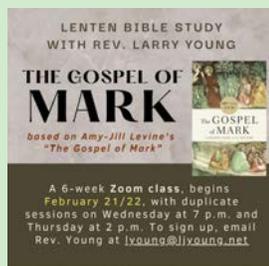
As we approach the season of Lent, First UMC offers two Zoom book studies:

• **Rev. Keri Olsen Paget** will be leading a study of the book *Grounded: Finding God in the World, A Spiritual Revolution* by Diana Butler Bass. We will explore the book and our own experiences of “finding God-with-us” in the natural habitat and our human geography. Join us for four sessions of discussion and prayer via Zoom for the Tuesdays in Lent from 7 – 8 p.m. Don’t have time to read the book? Join us anyway, there will be a short introduction to discussion topics at the beginning of each session. To join, or if you have any questions, please contact Rev. Keri at [k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org).



**Tuesdays, 7 p.m. via Zoom:  
February 20, March 5, March 12, March 26**

• **Rev. Larry Young** will be offering a 6-week Lenten study on Zoom, using Amy-Jill Levine’s new book on *The Gospel of Mark*. Dr. Levine brings a unique Jewish perspective on this Gospel, as we would expect, having done another of her studies in 2022. She will introduce each session with a video, to be followed with a study based on her student book, available from Cokesbury.com (search book title.) The classes will begin on February 21/22, with duplicate sessions on Wednesday at 7 p.m. and Thursday at 2 p.m. To sign up, email Rev. Young at [lyoung@lyoung.net](mailto:lyoung@lyoung.net)



**Wednesdays, 7 p.m. classes: Feb 21, Feb 28, Mar 6,  
Mar 13, Mar 20, Mar 27**

**Thursdays, 2 p.m. classes: Feb 22, Feb 29, Mar 7,  
Mar 14, Mar 21, Mar 28**

Book links on the website:

[www.santamonicaumc.org/lenten-studies-2024](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/lenten-studies-2024)

## UPWARD BOUND HOUSE HOME RUN FOR KIDS 2024

You're invited to the 12th Annual Home Run For Kids, a day of exercise, food, and fun all for a good cause. Includes a 5k Run/Walk and a Kiddie K (1km) for families. Join the First UMC Church and Preschool Team! Sign up here: [www.santamonicaumc.org/home-run-for-kids](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/home-run-for-kids)

**Sunday, February 25, registration begins at 8 a.m., in Brentwood (11620 San Vicente Blvd)**

## LENTEN ART EXHIBIT IN THE FIRESIDE ROOM

Visit the Fireside Room during the Sundays in Lent to view the nature photographs of First UMC member **Emily Payne**. On Sunday, March 3, join Emily in the Fireside Room after church for a Meet and Greet - a time to chat with Emily and ask questions about her photographs and love of gardening.

**Sundays in Lent, beginning  
February 18 in the Fireside Room  
Meet and Greet with Emily:  
Sunday, March 3 after worship**

*A photograph from Emily's  
new garden series*



## FEBRUARY MID-WEEK RECITAL

The February Mid-Week Recital features **Coriolan Trio: Geoffrey Nudell, clarinet; Kevan Torfeh, cello; James Furmston, piano**. Geoffrey Nudell’s symphonic background includes performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Opera, and more.



Kevan Torfeh’s music studies were completed at USC, at L’Accademia Chigiana in Siena, in London with William Pleeth, and at the Hochschule Mozarteum in Salzburg. Jim Furmston enjoys a versatile career as recitalist, accompanist, and composer.

Visit the website for complete artist bios:

[www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series)

**Wednesday, February 21, 12:10 p.m. ONLINE:**

Facebook: @santamonicaumc • YouTube Channel :

[www.youtube/c/santamonicaumc](http://www.youtube/c/santamonicaumc) • Website:

[www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream) • The First

UMC App: (To download, go to the App Store/ FirstUMC\_SM)



Before the race, First UMC will hold a brief on-site worship service complete with Communion at 8:30 a.m. Look for the white First UMC tent. Find out what it means to pray on your feet! **You may also make a donation and not participate in the race.**



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## BIRTHS

- **Brennan Kamber Rold** was born to First UMC members Dane and Sarah Rold, on December 28, 2023.

## DEATHS

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

- First UMC member **Allan Walker** died December 25, 2023.
- First UMC member **Ronald “Ronnie” Krieger** died January 27, 2024.

## CONGRATULATIONS

- to First UMC member **Ron Theile**, who is now a Certified Lay Speaker on the West District. Says Ron of his recent achievement, “With continuing encouragement and support from Patricia, the church staff and the congregation, I have decided to step up my ministry to the District level. I thank the District for reviewing and approving my commitment to becoming a District Certified Lay Speaker.”

## ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS - THANK YOU!

Thank you for sharing the spirit of Christmas and donating to the **Alternative Christmas Fair sponsored by Missions Council!** You made a difference in the lives of 8 charities and raised over \$5,700. This is an awesome increase of 57 percent more raised than prior years. 100 percent of the proceeds were distributed the first week of January.



1. The People Concern	\$598.75
2. Wesley Foundation Serving UCLA	\$528.75
3. Children, Youth and Family Collaborative	\$653.75
4. Upward Bound House	\$773.75
5. Vietnam Medical and Dental Clinic	\$688.75
6. Harvest Home	\$648.75
7. Innerchange	\$596.75
8. Homeboy Industries/Training	<u>\$1,228.75</u>
	\$ 5,718.00

## PRAYER REQUESTS

The First UMC Prayer Group is a network of persons who provide regular, dependable, and confidential prayer support. You may send a prayer request to the church at any time, and our Prayer Group will be notified of your request.

<https://santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests/>

## COMMUNITY ONLINE

As seen on Instagram:  
“What the **United Women in Faith Mission** looks like...

First UMC member **Mary Clark** presented a check in person to Meals on Wheels West CFO **Kevin McNulty**.

The United Women in Faith believe “Love in Action can Change the World” We thank everyone who participated in UWF events throughout the year - through peanut brittle sales, bazaar purchases, etc. We are so grateful for all the support - your generosity allowed us to give a gift to Meals on Wheels West.”

**-United Women in Faith**



## 2024 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Thank you to the 88 donors this year that have pledged \$465,000. This has been our season of joy! We give thanks for each gift. We each have a vital part to play, sharing the riches God has entrusted to us to undergird the on-going work of our congregation and equip it for the future God unfolds. We are \$20,000 shy of our goal and prior year commitments, so if you are on the fence about committing, reach out to Reverend Patricia Farris or Christina Eddy, Business Administrator. Your gifts helps us plan for all that is to become this year.



## FLOWERS

You may order flowers to remember or honor a loved one for Sunday Worship service for **Feb 4 & 11**. **During Lent**, dried floral arrangements at the reredos help to remind us of our Lenten Discipline. You may still order flowers to remember or honor a loved one for Sunday Worship to be displayed in the Narthex. Order flowers online: [www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund), or at the Sunday Welcome Table.



## CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

### • REIGNITING OUR FUTURE

All are welcome to an exclusive first look at CST's new home in Westwood, as well as exciting updates about the new initiative and their next chapter.

**February 25, 3 – 5 p.m. Claremont School of Theology**

Now located at Westwood United Methodist Church, 10497 Wilshire Boulevard, LA, CA 90024.

Register on their website:

<https://cst.edu/reigniting-our-future>



### • CST SPECIAL APPEAL

“...Nearly a century and a half later, Claremont School of Theology is at a place of urgency. Without your help, the mission of the only United Methodist seminary west of the Rocky Mountains may come to an end, and the only progressive seminary in southern California may close its doors. Over the course of the next 18 months, CST will call on our community to achieve our \$3 million Special Appeal goal.”

Link to give: <https://cst.edu/special-appeal/>

## HAITI MISSION NEWS

From Haiti Team Leader Todd Erlandson: “We hear from **Caz Souffrant**, one of our Haiti in-country project managers, that he and his family will immigrate to Mandeville, Louisiana! They will be staying with a family and supported by a church there. So amazing that they were granted permission to immigrate after a year of the application process!” Congratulations, Caz!



First UMC member **Brandon Searfoss** leads the sound and video board on Sunday mornings from the balcony. We welcome First UMC member **Jake Erlandson**, training to be an assistant AV tech!

## REQUEST A PRAYER QUILT

Led by **Sue Payne and Maile Marquand**, the Prayer Quilt Ministry offers Prayer Quilts to those in need. To request a quilt:

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 and Sue Payne at: [prayerquilts@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:prayerquilts@santamonicaumc.org). **(Prayer quilts may only be requested and sponsored by members of the First UMC congregation.)**
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, where you may tie a prayer knot during in-person worship, or view the quilt on the Livestream.

**The next meeting date is Saturday, February 17.**

Contact [info@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:info@santamonicaumc.org) if you would like to volunteer. Prayer Quilt Ministry on the website (*includes the 20th Anniversary Celebration video*):

[www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry)



## LOOKING FORWARD TO MARCH

### SPIRIT SISTERS RETREAT

The Spirit Sisters, led by Paster Dorothy Bimber Worley, have rescheduled their annual All-Day Retreat for March 2. All are welcome to study scripture, pray, reflect, sing together, and get to know Jesus and each other better. They “seek out to live out Jesus’ Great Commandment to love with every fiber of our being.” For more information and to sign up, contact Pastor Dorothy (626)826-8301.

**Saturday, March 2, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the Fireside Room**

### SAVE THE DATE:

### ST. PATRICK’S DAY LUNCHEON



Women of Action, a circle of United Women in Faith, in partnership with Fellowship and Events and Children’s Ministry, present the 22nd Annual St. Patrick’s Day Luncheon on March 17, after worship in Simkins Hall. The suggested donation of \$10 per person includes lunch and a rousing singalong with virtuoso piano accompaniment. Children are welcome and will be provided seasonal crafting materials. Children under 5 admitted for free. Don’t forget to wear green!

**Sunday, March 17, after worship in Simkins Hall**



# Community Photos



Scenes from the December 2023 Christmas Eve services



The Sunday School kids led the UMCOR Faith-in-Action project with the congregation on Sunday, January 14



First UMC member Bill Buxton led his talk, "Finding Purpose and Identity in God through Times of Physical and Cognitive Illness and Challenges," in the Fireside Room on January 21

## PRESCHOOL CORNER



Artwork celebrating MLK Day at the Preschool. "I had a dream...to make the world a better place."



The United Women in Faith held their annual Game Day in Simkins Hall, with proceeds benefiting their mission projects.



Listening Hearts Women's Group meets weekly in-person (here at Literati Cafe) and online, led by Tricia Guerrero

Fri Feb 9 Preschool Lunar New Year  
 Mon Feb 26 Preschool Book Fair (through the week)

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
OF SANTA MONICA



1008 11th St.  
Santa Monica, CA 90403  
310-393-8258



Scan to visit  
the website



@santamonicaumc

**FIRST UMC OFFICE HOURS**

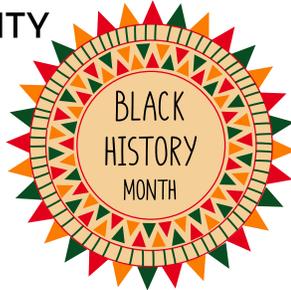
Tuesday - Friday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.,  
and by appointment

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



**SANTA MONICA COMMUNITY  
BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

Downtown Santa Monica is  
celebrating Black History Month  
with a community festival and  
"Santa Monica Trailblazers"  
banner installation.



**SOLIDARITY & CELEBRATION: BLACK HISTORY  
MONTH CELEBRATION**

**Saturday, February 24, 1-8 p.m., Third Street Promenade.**  
Hosted in partnership with Santa Monica Black Lives  
Association.

**SANTA MONICA TRAILBLAZERS**

**February 1 - 29, Third Street Promenade**

This special banner installation features historical Black  
leaders in the Santa Monica Community. The installation was  
curated by Black Santa Monica Tours and Concierge and  
created in partnership with the Quinn Research Center.

**CONGREGATION CARE CORNER**

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 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](mailto:a.premer@santamonicaumc.org). Or, call (310)393-8258  
ext. 103. Visit the website for Community Care - a list of local  
resources including info for senior assistance, Medicare,  
American Red Cross, MODE (on-demand  
transportation for seniors and individuals  
with disabilities) bereavement resources,  
and more!

Visit: [www.santamonicaumc.org/care](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/care)



*Youth Sunday*



*The First UMC Youth led Youth Sunday on Sunday, January 28.  
**Megan Crawford, Tia Hansen, and Amelie Hughes** gave their  
senior sermon reflections. Outstanding job to all! After worship,  
the First UMC Scouts held their annual Girl Scout Cookie Sale.*