

## HORIZONS

BY REV. GREG BATSON

Greetings First UMC of Santa Monica! I am excited to return to the congregation where my journey in ordained ministry began as an Associate Pastor. Twenty-four years ago, Tania and I, along with our 22-month-old son Tom, moved from New York City to Santa Monica to begin this new chapter of our life. You welcomed us then with open hearts and arms. The next four years were full and rich. I was part of a wonderful staff, learning the fundamentals of being a pastor. Tania pursued her career as a professional singer in Los Angeles. Our family grew with the birth of our son Dan in 2003 at Santa Monica Hospital (Wes would arrive two years later in Burbank). This congregation nurtured us, and we are so grateful for that time together.

Over the next twenty years, we have moved to different locations throughout Southern California. I have served as Senior Pastor of three other congregations: Burbank First UMC, Aldersgate UMC in Tustin, and Foothills UMC in La Mesa. I also served as President & CEO of the California-Pacific United Methodist Foundation. Like all journeys, there have been unexpected twists and turns, but always filled with God's grace. Tania has now moved into non-profit fundraising and development. Our three sons are now young adults. Tom lives in New York City and works for Trinity Church Wall Street Philanthropies. Dan graduated last month from Chapman University with a degree in Broadcast Journalism and Documentary Filmmaking. Wes has completed his freshman year at UC Santa Barbara and is majoring in Communications.

When Tania and I met with the Staff Parish Relations Committee for our introductory meeting, we were delighted to reunite with old friends and meet new ones. Jack Fry reminded us that he was the SPRC Chair when we departed in 2004. He remembered saying then this was not "Farewell" but "Aloha." In the Hawaiian language "aloha" is used to say "hello" and "goodbye," but it is much more than that. The roots of the word mean "presence" (alo) and "breath" (ha). Aloha then is the sharing of one's spirit with others, and therefore also a word for love and friendship. Jack was prescient as we now come full circle, returning to where this journey in ministry first began.

This congregation has a rich history as a community of faith. Over the past 150 years, First UMC Santa Monica has been a spiritual home for many generations. We have had great pastoral leadership, including Kenny Carlson, Paul Woudenberg, Don Shelby and of course Patricia Farris. We wish Patricia and David Bremer all the best as they begin a new chapter of their journey in retirement. I am honored and grateful to have this opportunity to lead this wonderful congregation as we take our next steps together.

In his greeting to the church in Corinth, Paul wrote: "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." Trusting in God's grace, we are excited to be in partnership with all of you as we continue this journey together. We look forward to meeting and reuniting with you all in July!

## WELCOME LUNCHEON FOR THE BATSONS

Let's give Greg and his family (wife Tania, sons Tom, Dan & Wes) a warm welcome on their first Sunday at First UMC! On July 7, Pastor Batson will lead worship, followed by a special luncheon after worship in Simkins Hall. We are excited to welcome the Batsons into our community and to begin working together in sharing God's love. Don't forget to wear your nametags! If you need a nametag, email David: [d.penson@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:d.penson@santamonicaumc.org).

**Sunday, July 7**

**10 a.m. Worship: Rev. Batson leading worship**

**11 a.m. Welcome Lunch for Greg and family**





## WORSHIP: IN-PERSON AND ONLINE

### WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

We worship on Sundays at 10 a.m. in-person in the Sanctuary each week. If you feel ill, please choose to worship from home online.

### COMMUNION SUNDAYS



**Ben Ing** will bake the Communion bread this month. **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

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:** click on link on the home page of the app (to 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 foster an open-minded culture where all are invited to spark deep conversation and find spiritual meaning in a safe and diverse environment. People ask us what this means. For us, it means that everyone is invited to the table, just as you are. It means holding space for one another as we explore spiritual meaning. It means gathering together and learning ways to better love the world around us. And it means we have a lot of fun together! We would love to answer any questions or get you connected.

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

On the website: [www.santamonicaumc.org/open-space](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/open-space)

**July Meeting: July 17, 7 p.m. off-site**

### FLOWERS

Do you have a loved one you would like to dedicate flowers to on a given week? The church office can assist with the dedication and the cost is \$80. Order at the Sunday Welcome Table, or online: [www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund)

**Available Sundays: all Sundays in July**



### JULY ON-GOING MINISTRIES

- **Men’s Bible Study** Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom
  - **Open Space Young Adults** July 17, 7 p.m. Off-site
  - **Listening Hearts Women’s Group** July 3 & 17, Coffee and Connect: 10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd, LA CA 90025) July 10 & 24, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom
  - **Prayer Quilt Ministry** Third Saturday of the month: Meeting July 20, Room 300
  - **The Chancel Choir** *The Choir is on rehearsal summer break*
  - **Blood Pressure Screenings** July 14, in the Alcove
  - **Sunday School for Kids** Sundays, 10 a.m. Meets in the Sanctuary for Children’s Message, then goes to Room 204 (Toddlers) and Room 206 for K through 5th Grade.
  - **UMYF Youth Group** on summer break
- For more info, visit: [www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org)

### CHILDREN’S MINISTRY / SUNDAY SCHOOL

Families are invited to begin worship in the Sanctuary. Following the Children’s Message, children are guided to Sunday School for ages 12 months through 5th grade in the Education Building. **Parents with infants are welcome to worship in the Sanctuary or in the “Prayer Ground” Family Area in the Narthex.** You are invited to look around and greet a child and their family in worship. 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](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry)

### 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 weekly. On the first and third Wednesdays we meet in person at Literati Cafe, and for the second and fourth Wednesdays we meet via Zoom in the evening. All are welcome to join! Contact Tricia Guerrero to learn more:

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

**July Meetings: July 3 & 17**, Coffee and Connect: 10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd, LA CA 90025) **July 10 & 24**, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom



### 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/>

## JULY at a Glance

**First week of July** Youth Service Project trip underway

**July 4 - 5** Church Office closed

**July 5** Walk the Labyrinth/Chapel Open for Prayer

**July 7** During Worship: Rev. Greg Batson's first Sunday in worship/Holy Communion  
After Worship: Special luncheon welcoming Greg and family (see page 1 for info)

**July 10 -13** Western Jurisdictional Conference 2024

**July 14** During Worship: Moments for Mission: United Women in Faith

After Worship: Companions in Christ meeting  
Blood Pressure Screenings in the Alcove

**July 16** Church Council Meeting

**July 20** Prayer Quilt Workparty meeting

**July 21** After Worship: UWF Christmas in July  
Companions in Christ meeting

**July 28** After Worship: Companions in Christ meeting

**July 30** Investment Committee Meeting

## UWF CHRISTMAS IN JULY 2024 BOUTIQUE SALE

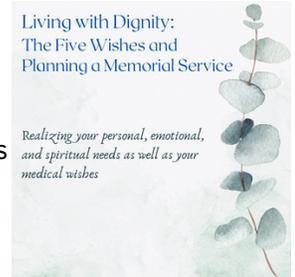
The United Women in Faith look forward to their Christmas in July sale! Featuring Christmas ornaments, décor, and delicious homemade baked goods. Proceeds from the sale will benefit United Women in Faith mission projects.

**Sunday, July 21, after worship in the Simkins Hall Alcove**



## LIVING WITH DIGNITY ADVANCED CARE PLANNING: SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT FOR HELP

The Pastoral Care Staff here at First UMC offers many services, including guidance with advance care planning, and memorial services. The Five Wishes is the first easy to-use Living Will that talks about your personal, emotional and spiritual needs as well as your medical wishes. If you're interested in scheduling an appointment with **Anne Premer**, Congregation Care Associate, she will assist in answering questions and filling out the paperwork. You may also pick up our Memorial/Funeral Planning Guide for reference now and in the future. Advance planning is always welcome, as you share with us your favorite Scriptures and hymns. Contact Anne Premer for more information: [a.premer@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:a.premer@santamonicaumc.org), or call 310-393-8258 x 103.



## DONATIONS NEEDED FOR BACKPACKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE

Our church has a long history of supporting students through the gift of backpacks and school supplies each year. This year your donations will go towards the **School Bell Backpack Program through the Assistance League of Santa Monica**. With our help, this program will supply 26 schools across Santa Monica and Los Angeles with over 600 backpacks filled with school supplies.



During the month of July, First UMC will continue the tradition of taking donations that will enable us to support students heading to school. **We are ONLY accepting money donations (not supplies) towards the purchase of supplies in bulk.**

To donate, go to [www.santamonicaumc.org/school-supplies](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/school-supplies), click Give Online, then select "School Supplies" in the dropdown menu. You may also send in a check made to First UMC, notate "School Supplies" in the memo.

We recognize families continue to face great challenges, so let's come together and support the kids and families in our communities to help them to learn and succeed this school year!

## 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. The First UMC Chapel will also be open for prayers.

**Friday, July 5, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Simkins Hall and the Chapel**

## UN-TIED METHODISM

Podcasts available on Apple/Spotify

Why do Methodists use Welch's grape juice for communion? What is with the cross and flame logo? Explore these questions and more as we examine the roots of the United Methodist Church (and its predecessor denominations) to understand why the UMC is the way that it is...and where it might be going. Dr. Ashley Boggan Dreff hosts this production of the General Commission on Archives and History of the UMC. Topics include: "Reimagining unity: Regionalization and The UMC," "Holy boldness: Celebrating women of Methodism," and much more.

To listen, visit:

**Apple Podcasts:**

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/channel/un-tied-methodism/id6442455632>

**Spotify:**

<https://open.spotify.com/show/4koQX6Q8KEvX6V6POMIwBE?si=b3ec2ae03a214d7c>



## CELEBRATING EMILY PAYNE

It is with gratitude, celebration and sadness that we say goodbye to **Emily Payne** as a Youth Counselor after 10 years of service with the Youth Ministry. Her journey began with Children's After School Theater (CAST), eventually leading her to become a leader for the Youth Service Project trips and eventually a Youth Counselor for Sunday night Youth Group. Becoming a Youth Counselor is no small task - it is a commitment of your time, your energy, your spirit, your whole self - almost every Sunday night during the school year - working with teenagers, arguably one of the most challenging age groups to understand and connect with. But Emily's gifts of compassion and kindness, her grounding and steady presence, her sense of humor, and her caring nature combine into a Youth Counselor who is well loved and respected in the Youth Group. Thank you, Emily!



"Spending time with Emily every week and especially on service projects are some of my most memorable and meaningful moments of the youth program. She is fun and silly and wise and always treated me like an equal, even when I was a youth and she was a counselor. She is a beautiful role model, always a responsible adult who is proud to be herself and sticks up for the things she believes in."

- **Maddy Ing**, Youth Counselor and former youth

"Working with someone at Youth Group who also happened to be IN the youth group at the same time as me, is such a full circle kind-of-thing. She understood the games, programs, and traditions right from the get-go and for that I am grateful. She has been a friend and trusted adult, giving her time, wisdom, and patience to our youth so faithfully. She will always hold a special place in the history of UMYF at First UMC Santa Monica."

- **Adam Guerrero**, Youth Council Chair

"I have had the pleasure of having Emily as a counselor, while I was a youth, and also being a counselor with her as an adult. She has always been a strong role model, demonstrating that I can be firm in my beliefs and standards and the importance of having fun and sharing that with others. I will be forever grateful that she was one of many people who have welcomed me into this community, which has made such a meaningful impact on my life."

- **Elsa Taylor**, Youth Counselor and former youth

## GENERAL CONFERENCE REFLECTION: THE ROOM WHERE IT HAPPENED

by Rev. Dr. Denyse Barnes, Director of Justice and Compassion EMT

"General Conference has been a ride through every single emotion I have ever felt and some new ones I didn't even know existed! To say the Holy Spirit has been active is the biggest understatement I have ever made - she has to be more exhausted than every single delegate and observer here in Charlotte combined! As queer clergy GC is always a challenging and emotional experience, and it is impossible to forget that even when the evidence of God and Spirit moving through our United Methodist Church and her people. So with every single cautious step we have taken towards regionalization and removal of the harmful language so we can truly live into the all expansive and loving church John Wesley dreamed of...." To read entire article, visit: <https://www.calpacumc.org/general-conference-2020/general-conference-reflection-the-room-where-it-happened/>



## 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, July 20, Room 300.** Contact [info@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:info@santamonicaumc.org) if you would like to volunteer. Prayer Quilt Ministry on the website: [www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry)





# COMMUNITY NEWS

## DEATHS

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

- First UMC member **Theodore Wood** died January 30, 2024.

## WEDDINGS

- First UMC member **Preston Searfoss** married Lyra Kae on May 22, 2024.



*Brandon, Janet, Lyra and Preston Searfoss*

## CONTACT REV. FARRIS

Rev. Patricia Farris' last day was June 30. If you would like to personally contact her, she can be reached at [revpfarris24@gmail.com](mailto:revpfarris24@gmail.com)

## BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

Did you know that regular blood pressure screenings can help detect hypertension early, which can reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and other complications? The Health Ministry Council continues to offer free monthly blood pressure screenings during Sunday coffee hour. We encourage everyone to stop by and check in for a free blood pressure screening and discussion of healthy lifestyle habits for maintaining optimal blood pressure levels.

Next screening: **Sunday, July 14, after worship in the Alcove**



*We are grateful to all who volunteer their time in the Health Ministry Council, and for their continued care of the congregation!*

# LOOKING FORWARD TO AUGUST

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PRESENTS MESSY CAMP

Join First UMC for Messy Camp (formerly known as Vacation Bible School/Camp), a one week summer program for children in grades TK through 5th grade. The week is full of fun and games, music and movement, scripture stories and crafts, science and mission projects. All of this within the context of exploring our beautiful and messy world together, and learning ways we can make our community and world a better place.

**Theme:** God's Messy Creation – Exploring the world around us and how we can make a difference!

**Who:** Ages 5 years old/entering TK to those finishing 5th grade

**When:** Monday, August 5 –

Friday, August 9

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Messy Camp Cost: \$100/child

**Register now on the website!**

[www.santamonicaumc.org/messy-camp](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/messy-camp)



## SECOND ANNUAL COMMUNITY FREE MARKET

First UMC is pleased to present the second annual Community Free Market—a one day event where all are welcome to come by and pick up FREE new or gently used kitchen /household items!



Bring your friends and family, and look for housewares, small appliances (toasters, blenders), holiday items, toys, books, and more!

Contribute items to the Market! (We will NOT be accepting furniture, clothing of any kind, electronics, large appliances, or items that aren't gently used or new. Tax ID Donation Slips available to those who contribute.)

**Drop-off days (in the Courtyard):**

Saturday, August 3, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Sunday, August 11, 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Contact Janet Guyette: 310-663-9861 or [janetguyette@gmail.com](mailto:janetguyette@gmail.com), with questions.

**Second Annual Community Free Market: Saturday, August 17, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the First UMC Courtyard**

*The Annual Preschool Spring Concert was held on Friday, June 21*





# Community Photos



*Rev. Patricia Farris' Farewell Sunday in worship, followed by a wonderful celebratory luncheon.*



*Rev. Robert English and family worshipped and visited after church on Sunday, May 26*



*On May 25, Karen Grothe, Martha Ross, and Maile Marquand volunteered at the Westside Food Bank Food sorting day - one of the May Month of Service projects.*



*The Preschool Spring Fair*



*The United Women in Faith lending a helping hand.*



*Adam Guerrero attended the 40th Annual Session of the California Pacific Conference, seen with Camille and Andy Mattick (top) and Karen Ing and Rev. Keri Olsen Paget (bottom)*



*The Open Space Young Adult group preparing a Welcome banner and basket for Rev. Greg Batson and family*

*June's Kids Night Out - always a big hit!*



*Jamie Jones, Families Ministries Coordinator, leading Preschool Chapel in the Sanctuary*

*The Community Reflection Tree was out in the Courtyard for Sundays in June. Each leaf had a question on it, giving the congregation a chance to reflect and answer the question in written or image form, and then add it to the tree during our community's journey of transition.*



*The Youth Service Project team was commissioned on Sunday, June 23. Many thanks to the congregation for supporting the team! Pray for them during their trip to Del Norte County, California, until July 7.*



*Scholarship Sunday was also held on June 23. Mira Pak, Chair, Loans & Scholarships Committee, introduces the recipients that were in attendance.*



## PRESCHOOL CORNER

- July 3** Fourth of July Parade
- July 19** Last day of School
- July 22** Preschool Camp begins

*Los Angeles County Lifeguards visited the Preschool, and explained their role at the beach, while impressing upon the children the importance of following safety protocols while swimming in the ocean and playing in the sand. Every child received a Lifeguard coloring book and a patch.*



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
OF SANTA MONICA

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310-393-8258



Scan to visit  
the website



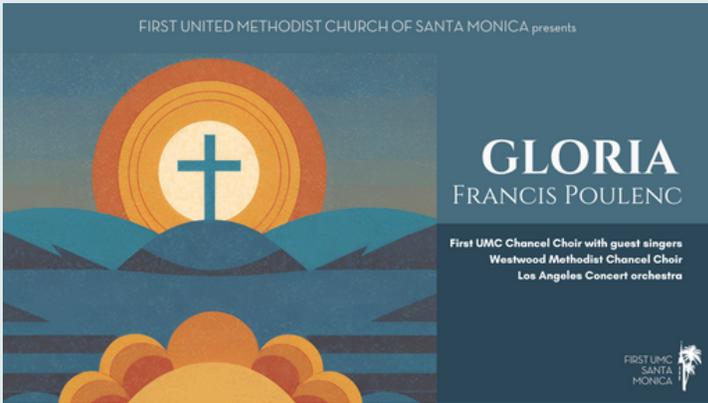
@santamonicaumc

**FIRST UMC OFFICE HOURS**

Tuesday - Friday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.,  
and by appointment  
Pastoral Care : 310-393-8258,  
enter ext. 1



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA presents



**GLORIA**  
FRANCIS POULENC

First UMC Chancel Choir with guest singers  
Westwood Methodist Chancel Choir  
Los Angeles Concert orchestra

FIRST UMC  
SANTA  
MONICA

Enjoy a selected piece from the **First UMC Spring Concert - Francis Poulenc's "Gloria,"** featuring the First UMC Chancel Choir with guest singers Westwood Methodist Chancel Choir, the Los Angeles Concert orchestra, and Dr. James Smith, conductor. Performed May 19, 2024. To view video, visit: [www.santamonicaumc.org/music-theater](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/music-theater)