

SENTINEL

vol.ccxlix, no. 8 • August 2024

HORIZONS

BY REV. GREG BATSON

August has traditionally been known as the month that we “take off” as a society. It is a time for travel and family vacations. Groups that meet weekly or monthly take a break from their regular schedules. We spend more time outdoors to enjoy the warm weather and longer days. It is a time for sabbath, for rest and renewal before the busy-ness of life returns in the fall.

I’ve noticed, however, that this rhythm has changed. Most schools now begin their new year prior to Labor Day, so family vacations have shifted. Camps from sports to science are offered every week for children and youth. And there really is no “down time” for the church. Worship happens every week, small groups continue to gather, and we offer Messy Camp for kids and host a Community Free Market this month. We also look forward to hearing the Youth Service Project team’s reflections about their recent trip.

There is nothing wrong with providing multiple opportunities for engagement and activity. It is a sign of a healthy church and community. It does mean we need to be intentional about observing a time of sabbath as God has commanded us to do. God did not create us to labor 24/7. There must be time set aside to simply relax and “be,” whether that is alone with God or in fellowship with one another. Jesus himself often did this after ministering to the crowds who followed him constantly. He would withdraw to a solitary place in order to reconnect with God and renew his body and spirit.

I’m preaching to the choir here, for I am guilty of not intentionally take time for rest. It is easier just to keep working until there is nothing left in reserve. When we reach that point, we find ourselves in a depleted, unhappy state. Let us check in with each other and make sure we intentionally schedule time each week for sabbath rest. If Jesus could do it, so can we.

There must be time set aside to simply relax and “be,” whether that is alone with God or in fellowship with one another.



MESSY CAMP

First UMC is excited to offer 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

www.santamonicaumc.org/messy-camp

Messy Camp

God's Messy Creation



Exploring the world around us and how we can make a difference.



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



Char Smith 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

After worship: www.santamonicaumc.org/sunday-service-archive

- **Facebook:** 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

On the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/open-space

August Meeting: Saturday, August 17

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/>



AUGUST ON-GOING MINISTRIES

- **Men’s Bible Study** Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom
 - **Open Space Young Adults** Aug 17
 - **Listening Hearts Women’s Group** Aug 7 & 21, Coffee and Connect: 10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd, LA CA 90025) Aug 14 & 28, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom
 - **Prayer Quilt Ministry** Third Saturday of the month: Meeting Aug 17, Room 300
 - **The Chancel Choir** *The Choir is on rehearsal summer break*
 - **Blood Pressure Screenings** Sunday, Aug 11, in the Alcove
 - **Sunday School for Kids** Sundays, 10 a.m. Meets in the Sanctuary for Children’s Message, then goes to the Preschool play yard during the summer.
 - **UMYF Youth Group** on summer break
- For more info, visit: 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

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

August Meetings: August 7 & 21, Coffee and Connect: 10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd, LA CA 90025)
August 14 & 28, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

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

Available Sundays: August 4/11/18/25

AUGUST *at a Glance*

- Aug 2** Labyrinth/Chapel Open for Prayers
- Aug 3** Community Free Market Donation Drop Off (9 a.m. - 12 p.m.)
- Aug 4** Holy Communion
Companions in Christ in the Fireside Room
- Aug 5** Messy Camp begins: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. thru the week
- Aug 11** Companions in Christ in the Fireside Room
Blood Pressure Screenings
Community Free Donation Drop Off: (11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.)
- Aug 17** Community Free Market in the Courtyard
Spirit Sisters Event in the Fireside Room
Prayer Quilt Workparty
- Aug 18** Report Back for Youth Service Project Trip
Pennies + for Haiti after worship in the Courtyard
Companions in Christ (*last session*)
- Aug 20** Safe Sanctuary Training, church and preschool staff
- Aug 25** Moments for Mission with Todd Erlandson, Haiti
Mission Team leader
Back to School & Preschool Teacher Blessings
Pennies + for Haiti after worship in the Courtyard

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, August 2, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Simkins Hall and the Chapel

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, with questions.

**Saturday, August 17, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
in the First UMC Courtyard**



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.

Sunday, August 11, after worship in the Alcove

SPIRIT SISTERS EVENT

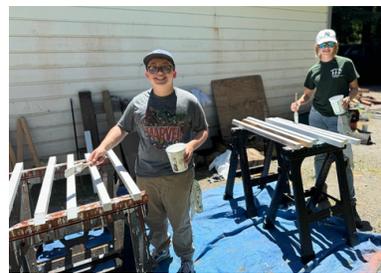
The Spirit Sisters, led by Pastor Dorothy Bimber Worley, are holding a gathering in August. They study scripture, pray, reflect, sing together, and get to know Jesus and each other better. They "seek out to live out Jesus' Great Commandment to love with every fiber of our being." All are welcome. For more information, please contact Pastor Dorothy (626)826-8301.

Saturday, August 17, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. in the Fireside Room

YOUTH SERVICE PROJECT REPORT BACK

We are excited to hear from the YSP team about their Summer trip to Del Norte County in Northern California with the organization, Sierra Service Project. They worked in the community on a variety of projects, including building home railings and a ramp, working in community gardens and forest trail work, and painting horse fences at the local fairground, just to name a few of the tasks! Stay after worship for a light lunch and listen to the Youth's stories and experiences.

Sunday, August 18, after worship in Simkins Hall



A few scenes from the Youth Service Project Trip (more photos on page 5)

HAITI UPDATE: PENNIES + FOR PEANUTS

BY TODD ERLANDSON, HAITI TEAM LEADER

Pennies for Peanuts 2024 is successfully underway! With all the challenges that we read about and see going on in Haiti, we are thankful to God that we are still able to get funds for projects to the village of Sobier, where they make a significant improvement to the lives of our Haitian brothers and sisters!

All installments of funds have been payed out for this planting season, which made it possible to prepare the ground on 20 plots of land for 20 families most in need, and to pay and feed hired workers. We have increased the use of fertilizer to keep the ground productive at the direction of a local agronomist that we have consulted. Seeds saved from last year's harvest were planted, and a preliminary "cleaning" of the fields was made last month, removing any invasive weeds. The harvest will take place in November, providing much needed sustenance and financial support to families.

Now that Caz and his family are living in the US, we are relying on his good friend and colleague Jean Kendy, who goes by "Didy," along with Osnel and Jakob in Sobier, to manage the work.



We are thankful for matching gifts from the Heart of Hollywood Foundation which makes these projects possible. With anticipation of expanded gifts this year, we plan to continue to provide goats to needy families and to help in the construction of cisterns for the storing of fresh water in individual homes.

We give thanks for all that God makes possible!
-Todd

PENNIES + FOR HAITI

Our annual Pennies + for Haiti drive is happening August 18 & 25 after worship. Haiti Team Leader Todd Erlandson will give us an update during **Moments for Mission on Sunday, August 25**. Drop off your loose change, cash or checks at in-person worship, or give online at: www.santamonicaumc.org/give, select Haiti Mission Donation in the drop-down menu.

Sunday, August 18 & 25, after worship in the Alcove



BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING TAGS

Every year in August, First UMC carries on the tradition of providing Back to School Blessing tags to all of the First UMC students and teachers. **Be sure to attend worship on Sunday, August 25, as we celebrate Back to School Blessings!** We will have a special blessing for our Preschool teachers as well as a blessing for students of all ages and other teachers not in the Preschool. If you would like a blessing tag(s) but can't make it to church, call the church office (310-393-8258) and we are happy to put them in the mail for you. Don't miss this special Sunday!



CONGREGATION CARE

Anne Premer, Congregation Care Associate, reminds us that August is National Make-a-Will Month, a month-long celebration that encourages Americans to create an estate plan. The National Council on Aging has helpful links for wills and estate planning: www.ncoa.org/adviser/estate-planning/ If you're interested in The Five Wishes, an easy to-use Living Will that talks about your personal, emotional and spiritual needs as well as your medical wishes, schedule an appointment with Anne: a.premer@santamonicaumc.org, or call 310-393-8258 x 103.

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. **(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, August 17, 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., Room 300.**



Contact info@santamonicaumc.org if you would like to volunteer. Prayer Quilt Ministry on the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry



LOOKING FORWARD TO SEPTEMBER

CYBER SECURITY WORKSHOP

Save the Date for a Cyber Security workshop led by First UMC members **Adam Guerrero, Ben Ing, Will Sweat and Brandon Searfoss** on Sunday, September 8, after worship. These First UMC members work in the field of cyber security, and will update us on the latest in scams and frauds, and answer any of your questions. Scammer fraud is an ongoing issue that has affected many in the congregation. **Many First UMC staff, including Pastor Greg, have had fake email addresses made in their name.** If you receive an email or text and wonder if it is real, please call the church office! (310-393-8258) **Staff will never solicit gift cards or donations of any kind.** **Sunday, September 8, after worship in the Fireside Room**

DEATHS

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

- First UMC member **Glenn Ernest Hopkins** died July 10, 2024.
- First UMC member Mira Pak's father **Ui Joon Pak** died July 14, 2024.
- First UMC member **Edith Rachel Schidel** died July 14, 2024.
- First UMC member **Marcia Jean Gayle** died July 13, 2024. A memorial will be held Wednesday, July 31, 12 p.m. in the Chapel.

BIRTHS

- **Mateo Paul Bancroft** born on June 20, 2024, to parents First UMC member Bianca Doria and Josh Bancroft.
- **Luna Guerrero** was born July 17, 2024, to parents First UMC member Perry and Yumi Guerrero.

CONGRATULATIONS

- **Christian Dodd** was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in the United States Army. He currently serves as a medic at Fort Johnson.

THANK YOU

- Thank you to those who donated to towards School Supply funds for the Assistance League of Santa Monica. **\$1500 was raised**, helping 26 schools across Santa Monica and Los Angeles with over 850 backpacks filled with school supplies!

REV. SANDRA K. OLEWINE ELECTED AS BISHOP TO CAL-NEVADA CONFERENCE

From the Western Jurisdictional Conference:

"It is with great joy that we congratulate former South District Superintendent and current Assistant to the Bishop, Rev. Sandy Olewine, on her election to Bishop. On Friday, July 12th, Rev. Sandy was elected as a Bishop to the Western Jurisdiction. On Saturday, July 13th, it was announced that she will be serving as Bishop to the California-Nevada Conference. In addition, an episcopal consecration service was held for the two newly elected WJ Bishops, Rev. Sandy Olewine and Rev. Kristin Stoneking. We ask that you join us in prayer for our beloved Rev. Sandy Olewine in this new season of ministry. A blessing she has been to the South District and a blessing she will be to the California-Nevada Conference!"



Rev. Sandy Olewine, left, with Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

HOME COMING SUNDAY

Fellowship and Events Committee is excited to host Homecoming Sunday - stay tuned for more details! **Sunday, September 15, 10 a.m. worship, 11 a.m. Lunch and Festival Fun (bounce house and bubbles!) in the Courtyard**



2024 HOMEBOY 5K RUN/WALK

Join First UMC member **David Wilson** as he supports First UMC Mission Partner Homeboy Industries for their 15th Annual Homeboy 5K Run/Walk through historic Downtown Los Angeles! Your support helps Homeboy to continue their mission to provide training and support to formerly gang-involved and previously incarcerated people, allowing them to redirect their lives and become contributing members of our community. Join or donate to the team!



Father Greg Boyle and David Wilson

www.santamonicaumc.org/homeboy5k

Saturday, September 21, 8:30 a.m.

Homeboy Industries, 130 W Bruno St, Los Angeles, CA 90012

WOMEN'S TEA WITH THE UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The United Women in Faith will be hosting their second annual Women's Tea on Saturday, September 28, from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. This will be an opportunity for community with other women from First UMC, and to learn about the mission and work of our unit of the United Women in Faith. **We welcome special guest Tania Batson, Rev. Greg Batson's spouse, to the Tea!**

Childcare is available upon request. Let Jamie Jones know if you would like childcare:

j.jones@santamonicaumc.org

Saturday, September 28, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Simkins Hall

A scene from last year's tea



Community Photos



On Sunday, July 7, we welcomed Rev. Greg Batson for his first Sunday preaching, followed by a delicious welcome lunch for Greg and his family. Pictured (left to right): Tom, Wes, Greg, Tania and Dan Batson.



Scenes from the Youth Service Project Trip. Stay after worship on Sunday, August 18, for a light lunch and listen to the Youth's stories and experiences during their Report Back.



The United Women in Faith's Christmas in July sale was a big success and filled the church with Christmas cheer! Thank you to everyone who contributed to the event and supported the ongoing projects of the UWF.

GOOD SAMARITAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL MINISTRY

BY TODD ERLANDSON

Leigh, Marisol and I will be traveling to Vietnam from August 8 - 18, to open the Medical Building we have been designing and building for the Good Samaritan Medical and Dental Ministry and the people of Cao Bang, Vietnam. We will be part of a formal opening event with Dr. Vien Doan and other GSMDM board members, and dignitaries from the Vietnamese government and local community members, where I will be delivering a speech regarding the formal ribbon cutting. The opening of the building will be followed by an open house and tour that includes a joint medical clinic for local patients, conducted by a Vietnamese and GSMDM team of doctors and support personnel.



We are especially grateful to the First UMC **United Women in Faith** and individual donors in our congregation for making travel for our team and final preparations of the building possible. While in Vietnam, we will also be meeting with a newly formed Christian church congregation in Cao Bang, supporting them with the design of a new church and training center.

GSMDM's mission is "Sharing Love with the People of Vietnam" and "Making a Difference in the World by Changing Lives, One at a Time." Additional contributions can be made through their website at www.gsmdm.org

COMMUNITY TREE

Thank you to all who participated in our Community Reflection Tree during June and July! You shared many meaningful and moving ways of being the family of God in our ministries together.

Some recognize new life in our church through "1st timers on the youth work team, new faces at children's message, new groups for study and growth," "the various drama projects and performances that renew friendship and joy."

Some practices that have kept you rooted or motivated by faith include "caring for children as they grow up and learn to keep faith," "helping improve the health of our members and the community," "greeting new members and guests by smiling, listening, accepting and volunteering."



Some experiences of waiting and welcoming include "relaxing your hold," "people watching and tap dancing," "ask someone new their name," "taking someone new to In-N-Out to talk and talk and talk," "letting them know all we offer at our church." Let us continue growing and blooming as a family of God!



PRESCHOOL CORNER



The Preschool had a wonderful celebration for **Dee Menzies** - a gathering filled with warmth, laughter, and heartfelt sentiments as we honored Dee's remarkable five years as the Director of the Preschool, and as she now takes on the role of Director Emerita.



The Preschool celebrated July 4th with their annual parade around the block

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 : 310-393-8258,
enter ext. 1



Pastor Greg's son, **Dan Batson** (*far left*) recently served as a Summer Elementary Camp Counselor at the Lazy W Ranch, a UMC Christ-centered camp experience for children and youth.



First UMC volunteers **Dorothy Nichols, Linda Diane Anderson, Janet Searfoss, and Evelynne Markel**, after a fun and productive morning making sandwiches and assembling sack lunches at The People Concern's Annenberg Access Center, on Saturday, July 20. The Access Center is TPC's point of entry for homeless clients to explore sustainable housing opportunities and health services, have a meal, do laundry, get a shower, or acquire some clean clothing.

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS & ART EXHIBIT IS COMING SOON! **CALL OUT FOR ART**

Save the Date for our 17th Annual Blessing of the Animals on **Saturday, October 5**, immediately followed by our annual Blessing of the Animals Art Exhibit in the Fireside Room.

We're excited to once again put the call out for art from YOU, the congregation, and any artist friends or family that would like to participate. **This year, we have a new twist on our theme - we invite all to create their favorite species out of found objects or everyday household items - i.e. Recycled Art!**

Look for opportunities during Coffee Hour on September 15, Homecoming Sunday, to create your creatures - we'll provide materials and space for you to create. Or, work on your piece at home, and bring you artwork to the church office by **Tuesday, September 24**.

The exhibit will run thru October. If you'd like participate or have questions, email Tina Gage: t.gage@santamonicaumc.org.

Recycled Art ideas...

