

150 YEARS 1875 2025

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA

SENTINEL

HORIZONS

BY REV. GREG BATSON

How time flies! One year ago, my family and I returned to Santa Monica First UMC when I was appointed as your Senior Pastor. You welcomed us with open arms and hearts, and we have enjoyed a full and fruitful season. July 1 also marks the day that we begin a new year in the United Methodist Church as pastors are appointed by their Bishop to their churches or other ministry settings. I am grateful that Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank has reappointed me as your Senior Pastor and Rev. Keri Olsen-Paget as your Deacon Associate (50% time) for the 2025-26 year.

On June 11-14, we gathered together in Indian Wells, CA for our Annual Conference session. Approximately 1,000 clergy and laity representing 350 churches met both in-person and online to worship, vote on legislation and join in fellowship with one another. Highlights included voting on the ratification of four proposed amendments to The United Methodist Constitution, passing the 2026 conference budget, and welcoming 19 new clergy who were commissioned, ordained, or transferred into our Conference. Thank you to our lay delegates who represented our congregation: Karen Ing, Dick and Mary Crawford, and Adam Guerrero.

Now that summer has begun, this is a time for enjoying the outdoors with our family and friends. We will be doing that at church too, with Messy Camp for our children and the Youth Service Project in San Diego happening in July. Thank you for your support of these ministries that encourage spiritual growth for our younger generation.



*Last year's collection of backpacks for
Upward Bound House;
This year's backpack tags*

DONATION DRIVE FOR SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND BACKPACKS

First UMC Family Ministries is joyfully carrying forward our annual tradition of supporting students with the tools they need for a successful school year. This year, we're partnering with Upward Bound House to provide **50 fully stocked backpacks** for children in need.

Instead of collecting physical supplies, we're inviting you to contribute through monetary donations during the month of July—allowing us to purchase exactly what's needed and ensure every backpack is ready to go! How to Give:

- Visit www.santamonicaumc.org/give, click Give Online, and select "School Supplies" from the dropdown menu.
- Or mail a check to First UMC with "School Supplies" in the memo line.

Let's come together in love and generosity to help kids at Upward Bound House walk into the new school year with dignity, confidence, and everything they need to succeed.

JULY at a Glance

Fri July 4	Independence Day / Preschool and church campus closed
Sat July 5	Youth Service Project team departs
Sun July 6	Holy Communion / Baptism
Wed July 9	Speaking Across Differences via Zoom
Fri July 11	Walk the Labyrinth/Chapel Open
Sun July 13	Youth Service Project team returns United Women in Faith Book Study
Wed July 16	Mission Council Meeting via Zoom
Sat July 19	Prayer Quilt Workparty
Sun July 20	Lay Leadership Team meeting after worship United Women in Faith Christmas in July Open Space Summer Gathering
Tues July 22	Church Council Meeting
Fri July 25	Westside Food Bank volunteer day
Mon July 28	Messy Camp this week Staff Parish Relations Committee Meeting via Zoom

SPEAKING ACROSS DIFFERENCES: NAVIGATING DIALOGUE IN POLARIZED TIMES

Join the second of a three part minicourse from the **Institute for Islamic, Christian, Jewish Studies (ICJS) in Baltimore, MD, featuring Jewish Scholar Ben Sax, PH.D.** This course interrogates the question of what it means to dialogue within our current sociopolitical climate, and tries to chart a new dialogical path together by examining how different philosophers, political theorists, historians, and theologians have broached these questions during their own times of political peril. First UMC provides the links to prerecorded class sessions and resources that you can watch when convenient for you. Then, via Zoom on the following dates, **Rev. Keri Olsen Paget will facilitate a dialogue with those who have viewed the content.**

ZOOM SESSIONS:

- **Wednesday, July 9, 6:30-7:30 p.m.** Session Two: Dialogue as Liberation
- **Wednesday, August 6, 6:30-7:30 p.m.** Session Three: Dialogue as Resistance

To RSVP and receive the course content register here: www.santamonicaumc.org/differences-workshop

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: July 6, August 3/10/17/24/31

WALK THE LABYRINTH / CHAPEL OPEN FOR PRAYERS

The Labyrinth is open on the first *Friday of every month, 1– 3 p.m. in Simkins Hall. If you've never walked the Labyrinth before, there are printed instructions to help with your walking meditation, or see a labyrinth host for guidance. Children and families welcome! For those unable to walk, we have finger labyrinths available. The Chapel is also open for prayers during this time.

***Friday, July 11, 1 - 3 p.m. in Simkins Hall and the Chapel** (note date change due to the holiday)

Messy Church celebrated World Labyrinth Day



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

The United Women in Faith will host two July events:

UWF BOOK STUDY

The United Women in Faith are excited to host an in-person book study featuring *Raise Your Voice: Why We Stay Silent and How to Speak Up* by Kathy Khang. It can be hard to speak up, especially in the ugliness of social media. Power dynamics keep us silent and marginalized, especially when race, ethnicity, and gender are factors. Activist Kathy Khang roots our voice and identity in the image of God. Khang offers insights from faithful heroes who raised their voices for the sake of God's justice and shows how we can do the same today in person, in social media, in organizations, and in the public square. Find the book at local book stores, or on Amazon (paperback/Kindle/audiobook).

Sunday, July 13, 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Fireside Room

UWF CHRISTMAS IN JULY BOUTIQUE SALE

The United Women in Faith look forward to their annual 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 20, after worship in the Alcove



Be on the lookout - for crafty fun! This Fall we will be having several craft days to prepare items to sell at our Christmas Bazaar. Crafts will be easy and instructions and supplies will be provided.
Dates to be announced.

OPEN SPACE SUMMER GATHERING

Calling all young adults! Join us for a casual backyard get-together in July to celebrate the summer and connect with one another. If you're interested in attending, reach out to Tricia Guerrero: t.guerrero@santamonicauc.org, or 310-393-8258 x104.



Sunday, July 20, 5 p.m. Offsite

WESTSIDE FOOD BANK ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Westside Food Bank continues to help with the long recovery period in the aftermath of the LA fires. The damage has been devastating, and Westside Food Bank is doing everything in its power to help our community. Join First UMC for the last Fridays of the month to help Westside Food Bank with packaging produce boxes.

Fridays: July 25, August 29, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. 1710 22nd Street, SM 90404
Contact Tricia to register: t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org.

Sign up for a day(s) that works for you.
You will need to sign a volunteer waiver and photo release upon arrival.



Looking forward to AUGUST

THIRD ANNUAL COMMUNITY FREE MARKET

First UMC is pleased to present the third 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! Now's the perfect time to declutter and donate your gently used goods to the Market. We're gladly accepting:

- Kitchenware & housewares
- Small appliances
- Holiday decorations
- Toys & books



We will NOT be accepting furniture, clothing of any kind, electronics, large appliances, or items that aren't gently used or new. Contact **Janet Guyette**: 310-663-9861 or janetguyette@gmail.com, with questions.

Drop-off days: Saturday, August 9, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Sunday, August 17, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Third Annual Community Free Market:

Saturday, August 23, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the Courtyard

2ND HISTORY AND ARCHIVES COMMUNITY GATHERING

One way we will celebrate First UMC's 150 years is to remember and celebrate our history and the stories we share. The History and Archives Committee is hosting a second Community Gathering to prepare for the Fall. We invite all to participate in a special and fun opportunity to look back at old pictures and memorabilia and help us identify people, places, events... and share our stories! No need to rsvp. Contact Tricia with questions. t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org.

Sunday, August 3, 11 p.m. - 12 p.m. Simkins Hall

MESSY CAMP



Join us for an unforgettable week of adventure at **Messy Camp**, where kids will explore the amazing creatures and wonders of **God's Wild World!** Each day, kids will enjoy hands-on science experiments, exciting games, Bible story adventures, creative crafts, catchy songs, and participate in a hands-on mission project. It's going to be a fun and wild ride you won't want to miss! Come get messy and see how wild and wonderful God's world can be!

The cost is \$150 for the first child and \$125/ each additional sibling. **Sign-ups close on July 14.**

We can't wait to explore God's Wild World with you!

Monday, July 28 - Friday, August 1, 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Registration on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/messy-camp



Scenes from last year's Messy Camp

CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY DAY

On Sunday, August 17, we are excited to celebrate the Claremont School of Theology in worship, with the President Emeritus and Professor of Hebrew Bible, Rev. Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan preaching.

Sunday, August 17, during 10 a.m. worship

CLAREMONT
SCHOOL of THEOLOGY

KIDS NIGHT OUT

Kids Night Out will be back in August! 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. \$35/child + \$15 for each additional sibling, 2 years – 5th grade.

Sign up for the Children and Family Ministries email: www.eepurl.com/h94fAX to receive registration info mid-July.

Saturday, August 23, 4 – 8 p.m. in the Education Building



MEET THE TEAM BEHIND FIRST UMC!

Welcome to the first installment of our monthly Staff Spotlight series! Each month, we'll lift up members of our dedicated team—sharing how they help bring the missions and ministries of First UMC to life throughout the week, and offering a glimpse into who they are beyond the office. It's a chance to celebrate their gifts, their service, and the lives they lead both within and beyond our church walls.

The Rev. Greg Batson is the Senior Pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica. This is his second time here on the pastoral staff serving this church; he first served as an Associate Pastor in 2000-2004. While his job description is oversight of the entire congregation and its ministries, Pastor Greg focuses his time on preaching and worship leadership (including baptisms and communion), pastoral care, adult education, developing lay leadership, and community outreach. Pastor Greg is a new member of the Santa Monica Rotary Club and serves our Annual Conference as Chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry. While being a pastor is a 24/7 responsibility, he enjoys spending time with his family – his wife Tania and three adult sons: Tom, Dan & Wes. Pastor Greg also enjoys an annual getaway to the Eastern Sierras for trout fishing with his friends each July.

Community News



THANK YOU FROM THE ISLAMIC CENTER OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

On behalf of the Islamic Center of Southern California, we express sincere gratitude for the generosity in allowing the use of your facilities for our weekly Friday Congregational prayers, since 2013.

The willingness to allow us to hold our weekly prayers demonstrated the spirit of interfaith, understanding, and compassion. Your kindness and hospitality are deeply appreciated and our community always felt welcomed and respected.

The Westside community recently acquired a new property in Santa Monica which will facilitate the establishment of a dedicated space for worship and prayer services.

While the use of your church facilities for regular services is no longer required, the time spent there and the kindness shown will always be cherished. It would be an honor to stay connected and explore future opportunities for interfaith collaboration and community engagement.

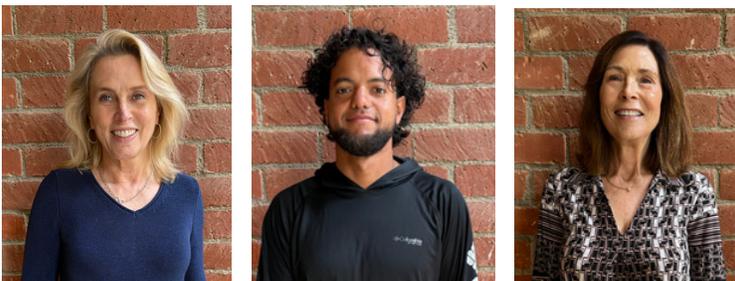


Members of the Islamic Center on their last day in the Fireside Room, with First UMC office manager Sarah Rold

DEATHS

- First UMC member **Mary Clare Van Iderstine Petersen** died January 11, 2025.
- We give thanks for the life and life everlasting of **Connie Brekke**, who died recently.
- First UMC member **Herbert Emil Roney** died May 30, 2025.
- First UMC member **Ella Mae Sheesley Holmes** died June 3, 2025.
- First UMC member Janet Searfoss' mother, **Marilyn Loos**, died June 6, 2025.
- First UMC Member and Preschool Co-Director Johanna Holman's husband, **Marvin Cortez** died June 14, 2025.
- First UMC Member **Diana Oh** died June 17, 2025.

NEW MEMBERS



On Sunday, June 8, we welcomed New Members (from left): Marla Bradstock, Antonio "Toni" Corta, and Evelyne Markel

Welcome

150TH PLANNING CONTINUES!

2025 is a special year for First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica - our 150th Anniversary! Our church was founded the same year as the City of Santa Monica, and we have been an integral part of this community since the beginning. **We look forward to a special worship service and celebration event on Sunday, October 12, 2025.**

Here are some special events leading up to the celebration:

- **Sunday, September 7:** 150th Kick-Off begins, Special Coffee hour includes History & Archives Exhibit in the Fireside Room.
- **Sunday, September 14:** Celebrating the Legacy Circle in worship, Special Coffee hour featuring Legacy Circle information and pie treats. Following coffee hour, Ron Thiele will be giving a special Sanctuary tour of the stained glass.
- **Sunday, September 21:** Celebrating Missions at First UMC, with a Special Coffee hour.
- **Sunday, September 28:** Music Sunday with Choir Recognition in worship, and a Special Tour of the organ with Ty Woodward after worship!
- **Sunday, October 5:** World Communion Sunday, Celebration of FUMC Women in Leadership.

We look forward to the planning and moments together as we remember our past, celebrate the present, and hope for the future. Contact the church office for special volunteer opportunities: info@santamonicaumc.org

BECOME A PART OF HISTORY!

In celebration of the 150th Anniversary, we are asking all to consider making a special milestone gift. The special donations received will be used to digitize the Sanctuary welcome monument sign, located at the corner of 11th & Washington, so we can spread our message throughout the community. Additional amounts will be used for fellowship and events during the Fall. Donations accepted anytime, online or a part of Sunday's offering. Thank you!



Artist rendering of signage (not exact representation)



A sneak peek of 150th Celebration tees, bags and mugs coming in the Fall!



Community Photos



Many thanks to all of the volunteers who helped out at Westside Food Bank packing produce. To join in the monthly WFB volunteer day, see page 3.



Pastor Greg (far left), Pastor Keri (below, 3rd from the right)



The 41st Annual Session of the **California-Pacific Conference** was held June 11-14, 2025 in Indian Wells, CA. Highlights included voting on the ratification of four proposed amendments to The United Methodist Constitution, passing the 2026 conference budget, and welcoming 19 new clergy who were commissioned, ordained, or transferred into our Conference.



June's Messy Church celebrated "Fruits of the Spirit"



David Guyette and son Jacob led the seminar "Keys to Maximizing Your Social Security," on Sunday, June 22



Celebrating Pride Month with Open Space and friends (top) and Community Pride Worship at St. Augustine by-the-Sea, with Molly Smith and Michael Lamb representing First UMC



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA
PRESCHOOL CORNER



Preschool Spring Fair!



WORSHIP

Welcoming new members
Marla Bradstock and
Evelyne Markel (not
pictured: Toni Corta)



WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY

We worship on Sundays at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary, and we Livestream the service on the platforms listed below.

COMMUNION SUNDAYS

Ben Ing will bake the bread for this month's Holy Communion. **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 10 a.m. livestream airs, go to:
www.santamonicaumc.org/sunday-service-archive
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc
- **YouTube Channel:** [@SantaMonicaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/@SantaMonicaUMC)
- **The First UMC App:** Go the App Store, search *FirstUMC_SM*

Let us know if you need assistance in joining online.

ONGOING MINISTRIES

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.** Let's celebrate the joyful and life-filled presence beloved children bring to our community each week!
www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry

YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Group is open to all 6th -12th graders in the community. They gather on Sunday evenings for dinner, games and a program or topic for discussion and reflection.
Youth Group meetings are on break for the summer.
Contact Tricia with questions: t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

THE CHANCEL CHOIR

Sing in the Chancel Choir! **Thursday evening rehearsals are on summer break.** Contact Jim Smith if you are interested:
djes@roadrunner.com

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men's Bible Study is a weekly Zoom meeting where men of all ages and generations gather to ground themselves in the Holy Scripture. As men try to navigate the stresses and complexities of this modern world and daily life, Men's Bible Study is a place for community, prayer and fellowship through the sharing of God's Holy word. For more information and to add yourself to the email list call the church office: 310-393-8258.

Tuesdays: 7 a.m. via Zoom

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. All are welcome to join! Contact Tricia Guerrero to learn more:

t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

Wednesdays: **July 2 & 16**, Coffee and Connect:
10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd)
Wednesday, **July 9**, 2 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. Call the church office, or visit:

www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests/

FREE BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

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

July Screening: **Sunday, July 27, after worship in the Alcove**



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. First UMC will display the quilt in the Friday Community Email, and 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 19, 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., Room 300.

Contact info@santamonicaumc.org if you would like to volunteer. www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SANTA MONICA



Scan to visit
the website



@santamonicaumc
www.santamonicaumc.org

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



FIRST UMC OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., and by appointment. (Office closed on Fridays.)

Pastoral Care : 310-393-8258, enter ext. 1



CONGREGATION CARE

Feel free to leave a phone message anytime (310-393-8258) or email message for any of the church staff.

The Pastoral Care line (**310-393-8258 and enter extension 1**), is always available for people to leave a message requesting care.

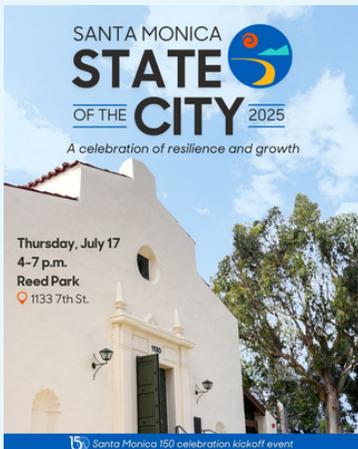


Pastoral Care Resources: Caring for You – Body, Mind, and Spirit at First UMC. Your well-being matters to us. Explore the resources on our website to see how we can support you and your loved ones through every season of life.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact: Anne Premer a.premer@santamonicaumc.org or (310)393-8258 ext 103. www.santamonicaumc.org/health-ministry

CITY OF SANTA MONICA CELEBRATES 150TH ANNIVERSARY

First UMC was founded the same year as the City of Santa Monica, and we are excited to celebrate with the city! Below is a listing of some upcoming events:



- **State of the City: A Celebration of Resilience and Growth:** This free, family-friendly event on **July 17th, 2025**, kicks off the 150th-anniversary celebration. It includes a reception with the Mayor and City Manager, live performances, poetry, art, and interactive booths.
- **Roots and Branches: A Tree's View of Santa Monica:** This exhibition at the Santa Monica History Museum explores the relationship between trees, urban development, and the city's history.
- **Santa Monica Pier 360 Beach Festival:** This festival celebrates beach culture with ocean sports, live music, food, and games.
- **Unearthing of a 50-Year-Old Time Capsule at Samohi:** Santa Monica High School unearthed a time capsule buried in 1975, reflecting on the city's history and future.
- **Fourth of July Parade:** The 2025 parade celebrates the arts in Santa Monica.
- **Reflecting on the Past and Future:** The city's 150th anniversary is seen as an opportunity for reflection on accomplishments, mistakes, and efforts to address historical injustices, particularly for marginalized communities.

Details: <https://www.facebook.com/cityofsantamonica>