

# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WORSHIP

Epiphany Sunday • Holy Communion • January 4, 2026

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## WE GATHER

WELCOME Rev. Keri Olsen Paget, Deacon Associate

PRELUDE Minuet *from* Suite Gothique (Léon Boëllmann)  
Ty Woodward, organ

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #254 United Methodist Hymnal  
We Three Kings

\*CALL TO WORSHIP Molly Smith, Lay Leadership Team  
We gather as people looking for the star, a sign that God  
is at work in the world.

**God, help us find your glory.**

We gather as people listening for the whispers of the Spirit, hints of the good news in the  
least likely places.

**God, help us notice your glory.**

We gather as people yearning for Love's presence, the assurance that we are not alone and  
Love will have the last word.

**God, help us encounter your glory.**

On this Epiphany Sunday, may the Light of Love shine among us, revealing divine glory  
through neighbors known and unknown, vulnerable children, and unexpected gifts.

**God, reveal to us anew the glory of your expansive Love that gathers us together and  
sustains us in loving service to one another and all creation. Amen.**

\*CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

"On this day earth shall ring with the song children sing to the Lord, Christ our King, born on  
earth to save us, him the Father gave us. Ideo, ideo, ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!"

\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*Please greet those worshipping near you.*

Molly Smith



\*Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Ann Wilson, Lay Lector

#2233 The Faith We Sing — Where Children Belong

**This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.**

**Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.**

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

I Am a Child of God

**I am a child of God; You are God's child, it's true. Children of God are called to love one another, as Jesus taught to do.**

*Children meet in the Sanctuary, following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School in the Education Building on the 2nd floor.*

## OUR MISSION & COMMON LIFE

Rev. Olsen Paget

We give thanks for God's Creating Spirit that continues to give us life and lead us forward!

**Thanks be to God!**

## SILENT PRAYER & PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Olsen Paget

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

## CHORAL RESPONSE

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## WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

THE LESSON Isaiah 60:1-6

Sam Johnson, Lay Lector

THE GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God!**

HOMILY "Your Light Has Come"

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

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## WE RESPOND

## WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Molly Smith

*Your continued financial support of the church is now more important than ever. Offering plates are located in the Narthex. You may also give online at [www.santamonicaumc.org/give](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/give); mail your gift to the church; or drop it into the mail slot of our offices any day of the week. You may continue to earmark gifts for our various mission projects. May God grow in us generous and joyful hearts. Thank you.*

## OFFERTORY

The Chancel Choir/Dr. James Smith, Music Director

I Ponder (Craig Courtney)

The heavens are silent, the wise men have gone, the flurries of angels have finished their song. The shepherds have long since returned to their sheep, the stable is empty, the star fast asleep. I ponder the wonders I carry inside: A star bright as diamonds, an ebony sky, the shepherd who cradles a little white lamb, the wise man who offers the gold in his hand. That Bethlehem evening is far, far away from the world where I live, the world of today. I pause and I ponder, a miracle starts, the Savior is born once again in my heart. I ponder the wonders I carry inside: the thunder of wings from the angels on high, the sight of the manger, the scent of the hay, the Child smiling up at the creatures He made.

**\*RESPONSE #94 UMH – The Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**\*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Sam Johnson

**Radiant God, the light of your wisdom and love shines for all who seek you, guiding us not with force, but with grace. Like the magi, we come bearing gifts, not to earn your favor, but in response to the gift of Christ you've given us. Use these offerings to reflect your light into dark places, so that others might be drawn to your love, your justice, and your joy. Keep us faithful in our seeking, generous in our sharing, and willing to be led wherever your star shines next. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Rev. Batson

*We will use the Musical Setting beginning on page 2257 in The Faith We Sing hymnal. Gluten-free vegan wafers are available. The Ushers will guide you in coming forward to receive the communion elements. You will be invited to take a piece of bread or gluten-free wafer, dip into the cup, and receive. Online worshippers are encouraged to prepare a piece of bread/cracker and juice to receive at home.*

#219 UMH – What Child Is This

#242 UMH – Love Came Down at Christmas

#612 UMH – Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness

**UNISON PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Rev. Olsen Paget

**O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. Look with compassion on the whole human family; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through us to accomplish your purposes on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

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**WE GO FORTH TO SERVE**

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**\*HYMN #251 UMH – Go, Tell It on the Mountain**

**\*BENEDICTION**

Rev. Batson

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

**POSTLUDE Psalm 19 (Benedetto Marcello)**

Ty Woodward

*Worship concludes with the Postlude music which prepares us to transition from worship to life in the world. You are invited to remain seated until the Postlude concludes, or to exit quietly.*

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



—We welcome **Community UMC of Pacific Palisades** each Sunday at 11 a.m. in the chapel with open arms and generous hospitality as they move forward during this time of transition.

—**Communion Server Ministry:** After today's service, members of the Communion Server Ministry will be taking the communion elements to those who were unable to worship with us.

—**Children and Families on Sundays:** Children meet in the Sanctuary, following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School in the Education Building on the 2nd floor.

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

—**Flowers:** To order flowers to remember or honor a loved one for Sunday Worship service, go to: [www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund). Available Sundays: January 11/18/25.

—**This Sunday's Flowers:** "In remembrance of my wonderful wife, nurse, and sailor." From Tom Weese.

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

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

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

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

—**Sunday Social Gathering:** After worship today, come say "Hello" for Coffee Hour in Simkins Hall. Stop by the Sunday Welcome Table if you have any questions.

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



Resident Bishop  
**Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank**

West District Superintendent  
**Rev. Dr. Siosaia Tu'itahi**

#### MINISTRY

Senior Minister

**Rev. Greg Batson**

[g.batson@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:g.batson@santamonicaumc.org)

Deacon Associate for Spiritual Formation

**Rev. Keri Olsen Paget**

[k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org)

Pastoral Associate

**Tricia Guerrero**

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

Congregation Care Associate

**Anne Premer**

[a.premer@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:a.premer@santamonicaumc.org)

Family Ministries Coordinator

**Jamie Jones**

[j.jones@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:j.jones@santamonicaumc.org)

#### MUSIC STAFF

Music Director

**Dr. James Smith**

Organist

**Ty Woodward**

#### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Business Administrator

**Christina Eddy**

[c.eddy@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:c.eddy@santamonicaumc.org)

Communications Director

**Tina Gage**

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

Office Manager

**Sarah Rold**

[s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org)

Membership and Facilities

Coordinator

**David Penson**

[d.penson@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:d.penson@santamonicaumc.org)

Program and Outreach Coordinator

**Brandon Searfoss**

[b.searfoss@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:b.searfoss@santamonicaumc.org)

Head Custodian

**Javier Espinoza**

#### PRESCHOOL STAFF

Preschool Co-Director

**Dane Rold**

[d.rolld@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:d.rolld@santamonicaumc.org)

Preschool Co-Director

**Johanna Cortez**

[j.holman@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:j.holman@santamonicaumc.org)

Preschool Director Emerita

**Dee Menzies**

[d.menzies@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:d.menzies@santamonicaumc.org)



## Baptismal Renewal

Each year as a new year begins, we enjoy the renewing of our baptismal vows as a time to recommit our lives in the example of Christ Jesus and receive a fresh out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. We invite you to prayerfully prepare for worship on January 11 together, in-person and online. If you are participating online, prepare a small cup or bowl of water which will become for us a source of new life. This is the water that refreshes life, nurtures growth, and offers new birth.

**January 11, 10 a.m. worship**

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## January Online Mid-Week Recital

First UMC is pleased to present the Online January Mid-Week Recital, featuring **Noah Sonderling, piano**. Noah is a piano fellow with New World Symphony and studies with Anton Nel. Awards include second place in the 2022 Sidney Wright Accompanying Competition, and first place in the 2018 Indiana University Concerto Competition. He has also appeared with the National Repertory Orchestra.

To read full bio, and to view past recitals, visit the website:

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

**Wednesday, January 14, 12:10 p.m.**

**ONLINE:** Facebook: [@santamonicaumc](https://www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc) • YouTube Channel: [@SantaMonicaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)  
• Website: [www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream) • The First UMC App: (Go to the App Store, search FirstUMC\_SM)

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## Kids Night Out

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. \$40/child + \$20 for each additional sibling, 2 years – 5th grade. Sign up for the Children and Family Ministries email to receive registration info:

<https://santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry> (click subscribe)

**Friday, January 23, 4 – 8 p.m. in the Education Building**

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## United Women in Faith Game Day

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

**Saturday, January 24, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. in Simkins Hall**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### • **Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast**

The Santa Monica Area Interfaith Council is hosting a MLK breakfast at Mount Olive Lutheran Church on **Friday, January 16**, beginning with breakfast at 7:30 a.m., and program starting at 8 a.m. More details to follow. *1343 Ocean Park Blvd. SM*

### • **Spirit Sisters Retreat**

The Spirit Sisters, led by Paster Dorothy Bimber Worley, are holding an annual All-Day January Retreat as they prepare for Lent together. Theme: "I AM the Light of the World" Women are encouraged to come at 8:30 a.m. for registration and breakfast. \$15 donation for breakfast and lunch. All women are welcome!

RSVP: Pastor Dorothy (626)826-8301 (*call or text*)

**Saturday, January 17, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fireside Room & Chapel**

### • **Listening Deeply: A Spiritual Formation Retreat**

All are welcome to deeply listen for God through the practice of Lectio Divina. Rev. Keri Olsen Paget will facilitate the prayerful practice and create opportunities for participants to respond creatively and as a community. Anyone who is interested in focusing their attention on God for the day is invited. Contact Rev. Keri at [k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org) with questions or for more information. This retreat is free, but registration is required. A simple lunch will be provided. Register on the church website by Friday, January 23:

[www.santamonicaumc.org/listening-deeply](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/listening-deeply)

**Saturday, January 31, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**First UMC campus**

### • **Children's Sabbath/4th Grade Bibles**

On Sunday, February 1, the children of First UMC ages 3 yrs through 5th grade will lead our church family in worship. We will also present 4th graders with a Bible. All children in our church, preschool and community are invited to participate in Children's Sabbath or receive a Bible. Contact Tricia: [t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org), if you know a 4th grader who would like a Bible.

**Sunday, February 1, during worship**

## MISSION AND SERVICE

TWO ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

### • **The People Concern**

Linda Diane Anderson (with the help of Janet Searfoss) run a volunteer group on the **third Saturday of the month** at The People Concern, making sandwiches and assembling sack lunches. The shift is 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., but often ends earlier.

**Next volunteer day: Saturday, January 17**

Contact Tricia to volunteer: [t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org)

### • **Westside Food Bank**

Westside Food Bank offers a volunteer opportunity every 4th Wednesday of the month. Upcoming dates:

**Wednesdays: Jan 28/Feb 25**

**10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**1914 14th Street, Santa Monica**

Volunteers will unpack cases of food for distribution at the Mobile Pantry at Virginia Avenue Park.

To volunteer, sign up on the WSFB website: <https://www.wsfb.org/take-action/volunteer-opportunities/>

Click on the option for "Wednesdays – 10am – 12pm: VAP Mobile Pantry Prep" and (Wed, Jan 28) in the calendar, then fill out your contact information.

### • **Youth Service Project Trip**

Each summer, a team of youth and adult volunteers from First UMC Santa Monica take time out of their summer vacations to go on a week-long mission trip. During the trip, youth learn about themselves and build relationships with people from all over the U.S., they learn teamwork and how to use power tools, and they are given the opportunity to help people to gain a safe, warm, and dry home to live in through their work. We collaborate with reputable youth-centered service organizations, and while the location of the trips varies each year, the mission remains the same: Be in community and of service to those in need.

**2026 YSP Trip: Appalachia Service Project**

**Saturday, June 20 – Sunday, June 28**

Look for upcoming fundraising opportunities that the youth will be holding to raise money for their trip.

<https://santamonicaumc.org/ysp>

## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

### • Children's Ministry

Families are invited to worship in the Sanctuary. Parents with infants are welcome to worship in the Sanctuary, in the Family Zone in the Narthex, or in the nursery.

[www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/childrens-ministry)

We have 3 groups for **Sunday School** following the children's message in worship:

- Nursery Care for 6 months through toddler
- Younger Elementary for Kinder-3rd graders
- New Sunday School group for 4th-7th graders

Please contact Jamie ([j.jones@santamonicaumc.org](mailto:j.jones@santamonicaumc.org)) for more info.

### • Preschool Enrollment - Open Now

Schedule a tour today with Preschool Co-Directors Dane or Johanna at 310-395-7292, or visit our webpage for more information: [www.santamonicaumc.org/preschool](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/preschool)

## YOUTH

### • United Methodist Youth Fellowship Group

The Youth Ministry at First UMC is a community of youth and adult volunteers who gather weekly to explore and grow in faith together. [www.santamonicaumc.org/youth-ministry](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/youth-ministry) **Sundays, 6-8 p.m. in the Youth Lounge** (Not meeting tonight, Youth are on a retreat)

## PRAYER

### • Walk the Labyrinth/Chapel Open for Prayers

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

**Friday, February 6, 1 - 3 p.m.** Simkins Hall/Chapel

### • Prayer Requests

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

[www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests/](http://www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests/)

### • Request a Prayer Quilt

The Prayer Quilt Ministry is a group that makes Prayer Quilts as a service for those in need. (\*Prayer quilts may only be requested and sponsored by members of the First UMC congregation.) To request a Prayer Quilt, visit:

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

## ONGOING MINISTRIES AT FIRST UMC

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

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

### • Men's Bible Study

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

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

### • Listening Hearts Women's Group

Listening Hearts is a spiritual community of women, led by Pastoral Associate Tricia Guerrero. Contact Tricia for upcoming meetings:

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

Next meeting: **Wednesday, January 7, 10 a.m.** at Literati Cafe

### • Prayer Quilt Ministry

Meets the 3rd Saturdays of the month, 9:30 a.m. in Room 300. Next meeting: **Saturday, January 17**

### • The Chancel Choir

The Chancel Choir provides music every Sunday during the 10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service. Sing in the Chancel Choir! **Thursday evening rehearsals are from 7:40 p.m. - 9 p.m.** Contact Jim Smith if you are interested in joining: [djes@roadrunner.com](mailto:djes@roadrunner.com)

### • Messy Church

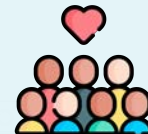
Messy Church is a monthly all age worship experience that explores God's love in an accessible way.

**Next meeting: Saturday, February 21, 4 - 6 p.m.** in Simkins Hall. *Theme: Choosing to Be Kind with our Words*

### • Blood Pressure Screenings

The Health Ministry Council provides free Blood Pressure Screenings once a month after worship.

Next meeting: **Sunday, January 11, after worship** in the Alcove





## Welcome to First UMC of Santa Monica!

Welcome to the worship, service, and fellowship of Santa Monica First United Methodist Church. First UMC is committed to a ministry that touches the lives of people in many significant ways. Through our worship and music, study opportunities, social groups, mission involvement and ministries of care, we proclaim the good news of God's love for all people. We also work to help make the world a better place in which to live, here in the communities of the Westside and around the world, and eagerly invite your participation in this beloved community. Our church has been a significant presence in the larger Santa Monica community for 150 years.

### First UMC Christmas Concert

You can still view this year's Christmas Concert on our website and YouTube Channel! This year's musical celebration featured Arthur Honegger's *Une Cantate de Noël* with the South Bay Children's Choir—along with the return of our beloved "Carols, Etc." Enjoy the glorious sounds of the Chancel Choir and guest singers, the Los Angeles Concert Orchestra, and the South Bay Children's Choir, all under the direction of James Smith. Enjoy the performance!

<https://santamonicaumc.org/music-theater>



#### Stay Connected

To join in fellowship and ministry online, here's how to connect online. (QR code to website)



**First UMC website:** [www.santamonicaumc.org](http://www.santamonicaumc.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc](http://www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc)

**Instagram:** @santamonicaumc

**YouTube:** @SantaMonicaUMC

**The First UMC App:** Go to the App Store, search FirstUMC\_SM.

#### Giving Matters



There are many ways to contribute to the mission and ministry of First UMC. You may give online via the QR code on the right (Point your phone camera at the QR code and click on yellow link), via mail, or onsite through the church office mail slot. To learn more about ways to give, visit:



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

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA

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