

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WORSHIP

Third Sunday in Lent • March 8, 2026

WE GATHER



WELCOME

Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate

PRELUDE Flute Sonata In C Minor, Ondeggiando man non adagio (Georg Philipp Telemann)

Cathy Larson, flute

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #127 United Methodist Hymnal – Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Whitney Hagan, Lay Lector

Welcome pilgrims on the way to the cross.

We are learning to follow Jesus.

The way is long, and we are thirsty.

We seek the living waters of Jesus.

We feel the weight of scarcity warring with hopeful whispers of abundance.

We need the living waters of Jesus.

We wonder if God will provide us with what we need, here and now.

As God gives us the living waters of Jesus, so God calls us to quench the thirst and meet the needs of our neighbors.

*CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength.”

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Whitney Hagan

Please greet those worshipping near you.

*Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sandra Jones, Sunday School Teacher

#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.

Following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School on the 2nd floor of the Education Building.

OUR MISSION & COMMON LIFE

Tricia Guerrero

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

Thanks be to God!

HYMN #2132 TFWS — You Who Are Thirsty

SILENT PRAYER AND PASTORAL PRAYER

Tricia Guerrero

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

THE PSALM Psalm 95

Brian Wong, Lay Lector

THE GOSPEL John 4:1-30, 39-42

Whitney Hagan

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

SERMON "God in Darkness and Light: Thirst"

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

WE RESPOND

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Brian Wong

Your continued financial support of the church is now more important than ever. You may place gifts of cash or checks made out to "First UMC" in the offering plates as they are passed. You may also mail your gift to the church or drop it into the mail slot of our offices any day of the week. Or, you may also give online at www.santamonicaumc.org/give, or mail checks through your online banking programs. 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

Where Can I Go? (Molly Ijames)

Cathy Larson

Where can I go, from you? O Lord, You've searched and known my ways; You trace my paths, You count my days. If I ascend unto the heavens, You are there. Even before my voice is heard, You read each thought, You know each word, and surely darkness cannot hide me, You are there. Where can I go, O Lord from You? If I should flee, You would pursue. Though I should take the wings of morning, I have known, within the womb You formed my frame. You save my face, You know my name and You have woven me together, I am known. All-knowing Lord, You test my heart; You search out ev'ry inward part. Where can I go, except to You, Lord, You alone. Where can I go? You are there.

*RESPONSE #95 UMH – The Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Brian Wong

Steadfast God of Hope, you have called us to rejoice—not in ease or achievement—but in the grace that sustains us through suffering, the love that meets us in struggle, and the hope that does not disappoint. You pour your Spirit into our hearts, shaping us into a people who give not out of obligation, but out of gratitude. As we bring these gifts, may they testify to your presence among us and to the promise of reconciliation you offer the world through Christ. Make us bold in our sharing, joyful in our worship, and confident in your grace. In the name of the one who died for us and lives within us, we pray. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*HYMN #178 UMH – Hope of the World

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Litanies (Jehan Alain)

Ty Woodward, organ

“When the Christian soul is in distress and cannot find any fresh words to implore God’s mercy, it repeats the same prayer unceasingly with overwhelming faith. The limit of reason is past. It is faith alone which propels its ascent.”

*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, or scan this QR code for the online form.



—**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. During Lent, flowers will only be available in the Narthex.

—**This Sunday's Flowers:** "In honor of our wedding anniversary on March 4." From Lindsay and Spencer Dewald.

—**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. To request a Prayer Quilt for someone in need, go to: 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: www.santamonicaumc.org/prayer-requests.

—**Westside Food Bank:** We collect food weekly for the Westside Food Bank. Bins are located outside the Sanctuary and at the Welcome table on Sunday mornings. Food needed: Baby foods and formula; Canned beans; Canned meats, fish, soups & stews; Canned pasta sauce, tomatoes; Canned fruits, vegetables; Cereal (hot and cold); Cooking oil; Flour and baking mixes; Fruit juices and shelf stable milk; Peanut butter and other nut butters; Protein, energy, or granola bars.

—**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.

—We welcome **Community UMC of Pacific Palisades** each Sunday at 11 a.m. in the chapel with generous hospitality.

Resident Bishop
Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank
West District Superintendent
Rev. Dr. Siosaia Tu'itahi

MINISTRY

Senior Minister
Rev. Greg Batson
g.batson@santamonicaumc.org
Deacon Associate for Spiritual Formation
Rev. Keri Olsen Paget
k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org

Pastoral Associate
Tricia Guerrero
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Congregation Care Associate
Anne Premer
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Family Ministries Coordinator
Jamie Jones
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MUSIC STAFF

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Dr. James Smith

Organist
Ty Woodward

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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA
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Today! Spiritual Gifts Workshop with Bill Buxton

God creates us all in special, unique ways (none of the two of us are alike), and calls us to join the work of building God's Kingdom in the here and now with our "spiritual gifts." We will be gathering after worship to learn more about these gifts and will work on a reflection to help each of us to discern our individual gifts. This can be a life-changing experience as the Spirit helps us see ways we can contribute to God's work in our communities and in the world. I hope you can join us!

Grab your coffee and donut, and meet us in the Fireside Room.

Today after worship, 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. in the Fireside Room

24th Annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon

Women of Action, a circle of United Women in Faith, in partnership with Fellowship and Events and Children's Ministry, will present their 24th Annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon! This year's proceeds benefit **Upward Bound House Family Place**. The **suggested donation of \$12 per person** includes lunch, a spirited singalong led by JoAnne Bailey and the ACT Singers with virtuoso piano accompaniment by Mary Crawford, and spellbinding prestidigitation by Ron Theile. Emcees Cindy McQuade and David Mayhan will supply the witty banter, colorful quips, and Irish antics. Craft materials for children (and young-at-heart adults) will be provided. Children under 5 dine free. **Don't forget to wear green!**

Ticket sales after worship, or buy tickets online: <https://santamonicaumc.org/uwf>

Next Sunday, March 15, 11:15 a.m. in Simkins Hall



All Church Service Trip (Intergenerational)

First UMC has a history of responding to disaster relief and engaging in long-term recovery efforts in various locations, including New Orleans, Haiti, and Houston.

Building on this deep foundation and history of service and outreach, we are excited to announce a new initiative: a week-long intergenerational service trip (**13 years and up**) scheduled from **Saturday, August 1, to Saturday, August 8, 2026**. We will be collaborating with the Sierra Service Project (SSP), sending a work team from our congregation to the **Navajo Nation in Arizona**. While SSP traditionally hosted only youth groups, in recent years, they have broadened their mission to include intergenerational service weeks for churches, scout groups, and other organizations, creating opportunities for a wider range of participants to serve. **Deadline to sign up: TODAY, March 8.**

- You may email Tricia with questions: t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org.

More info and sign up on the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/church-service-trip



UPCOMING EVENTS

• March Online Mid-Week Recital

First UMC is pleased to present the Online March Mid-Week Recital, featuring **Sangam: Paul Livingstone, sitar; Peter Jacobson, cello**. Sangam performs innovative compositions and improvisations straddling the worlds of Indian classical music and European polyphony which arc between deep musical meditations to dynamic poly-rhythmic counterpoint. Their unique sound is imbued with the free spirit of a jazz improvisation and incorporates touches of Latin, folk and popular music styles. To read full bio, and to view past recitals, visit the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/mid-week-recital-series

Wednesday, March 11, 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

• The First UMC App: (Go to the App Store, search FirstUMC_SM)

• Lenten Study – *Imago Dei*: Lectio Divina Study

Through Scriptural reflection and sharing, Rev. Keri Olsen Paget and Bill Buxton invite you to identify the *Imago Dei* (Image of God) in yourself and to perceive that same sacred image in others. We will explore our own socio-cultural identities and reflect on when and how we engage others who hold different identities. We hope this prayerful and Scriptural study will assist our ability to worship, work and live in harmony with diverse persons because everyone is of sacred-worth.

To sign up for either in-person or Zoom class, or if you have questions, email Rev. Keri:

k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org.

• **Rev. Keri facilitates a group on Sunday mornings: 8:30-9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room. March 15, 22.** *Childcare is available.*

• **Bill Buxton facilitates a group on Zoom Monday evenings: 6:30-7:30 p.m. March 9, 16, 23.**

Zoom link on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/lent

MISSION AND SERVICE

• The People Concern

Linda Diane Anderson and 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. Volunteers meet at the church to carpool. Contact Tricia to volunteer:

t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

Next Volunteer Day: Saturday, March 21, 8 a.m.

• Westside Food Bank

The Westside Food Bank volunteer opportunity is held every 4th Wednesday of the month. Volunteers will pack cases of food for distribution at the Mobile Pantry at Virginia Avenue Park.

Next Volunteer Day: Wednesday, March 25

10 a.m. – 12 p.m., 1914 14th Street, Santa Monica

Contact Tricia to volunteer:

t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

• 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

Visit the website for more info and to support the team:

<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.

Following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School on the 2nd floor of the Education Building. Please contact Jamie (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

- Welcome all to the Preschool Annual Book Fair!

All are welcome to come this week from Monday - Friday 8:30-10:30 a.m. Stop by to say hello and to shop for books for children, grandchildren, and friends.

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. **Sundays, 6-8 p.m. in Youth Lounge** www.santamonicaumc.org/youth-ministry

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!

April 3: Good Friday Special Walking Hours:

1 p.m. - 7 p.m. in Simkins Hall

—Join Ross Chitwood of Community UMC for a special musical performance of Taizé music from 6 - 7 p.m. in Simkins Hall on Good Friday.

• 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/

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

• 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

• 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.

Next meeting: **Wednesday, March 11, 10 a.m.** via Zoom

• Prayer Quilt Ministry

To request a Prayer Quilt for someone in need, visit:

www.santamonicaumc.org/prayerquiltministry

(*Prayer quilts may only be requested and sponsored by members of the First UMC congregation.)

Meets the 3rd Saturdays of the month, 9:30 a.m. in Room 300. Next meeting: **Saturday, March 21**

• 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

• Messy Church

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

Next meeting: Saturday, March 21

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. in Simkins Hall

Theme: The Zoo Is Not for You

• Blood Pressure Screenings

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

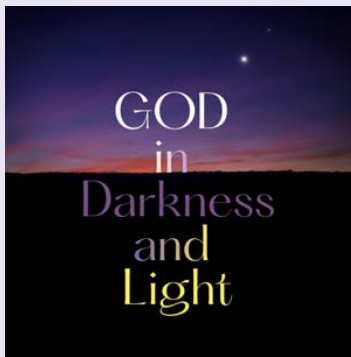
Next meeting: **March 22, after worship** in the Alcove.

Welcome!

Welcome to First United Methodist Church of Santa Monica! We are followers of the way of Jesus Christ: loving God, loving neighbors and offering compassion to a world in need. Rooted in the Methodist tradition of personal transformation and social justice, our community is committed to sharing God's love, grace and hope and to the flourishing of all God's creation. For over 150 years we have been an active presence in the Westside community and around the world.

We believe every person is of sacred worth and created in God's image. We welcome you to be a part of our community and worship with us, no matter your age, race, nationality, citizenship, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, ability, faith story, or economic situation.

Come and participate in beloved community - a place to belong, whoever you are, just as you are.



Lent is the 40-day period (not including Sundays), beginning with Ash Wednesday (**February 18**) and ending with the celebration of Easter (**April 5**). The 40 days is a symbolic reminder of Jesus' fasting and temptation in the wilderness following his baptism. In the early church, it was the time set aside for preparing candidates for baptism. It is a penitential season for all Christians, an invitation to repent of our sins and return to God in our daily living. The spiritual practices for Lent include fasting, prayer and almsgiving. Each of these practices provide space and time for self-reflection. We examine our lives, confess our sins, and ask God for forgiveness. It is a journey from the ashes that symbolize our mortality to the empty tomb that proclaims the resurrection of Jesus and new life for all. We are providing a full schedule of opportunities to observe a holy and meaningful Lent at First UMC.

On the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/lent

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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/

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



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