

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WORSHIP

Palm Sunday • March 29, 2026

WE GATHER



WELCOME

Rev. Keri Olsen Paget, Deacon Associate

PRELUDE Fanfare (John Cook)

Ty Woodward, organ

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN #280 United Methodist Hymnal – All Glory, Laud, and Honor

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Shannon Sturges, Lay Lector

The journey to the cross begins with a procession into Jerusalem.

We come to praise Jesus, the Messiah, the One who saves!

The crowds shout “Hosanna!” as Jesus rides in, humbly on the back of a donkey.

We come to call on Jesus, the Messiah, the One who saves!

The city murmurs, wondering who this is that demonstrates power through humility, strength without tyranny.

We come to witness Jesus, the Messiah, the One who saves!

Come, let us journey with Jesus to Jerusalem and declare our faith.

We come to follow Jesus, the Messiah, the One who saves!

*CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors. Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory.” (William Mathias)

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Shannon Sturges

Please greet those worshipping near you.

**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.

Following the Children's Message children (6 months through 7th grade) will be led to Sunday School on the 3rd floor of the Education Building.

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!

HYMN #277 UMH — Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

SILENT PRAYER & PASTORAL PRAYER

Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate

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 118:1-2, 19-29

Rev. Olsen Paget

THE GOSPEL Matthew 21:1-11

Shannon Sturges

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

SERMON "God in Darkness and Light: Turmoil"

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

WE RESPOND

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Shannon Sturges

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/Ty Woodward, conductor

Lift Up Your Heads, O Ye Gates (G. F. Handel)

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty. Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory, of glory.

*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

Tricia Guerrero

Humble Savior, you ride into our lives not with force, but with invitation—calling us to follow, to risk, and to trust. As we bring these gifts, we confess we don't always understand where the road leads. But like those who laid down cloaks and waved palms, we offer what we have with hope in our hearts and praise on our lips. Use these offerings to proclaim your kingdom—where love confronts fear, and peace dares to speak in the shadow of power. Save us, Lord. Use us. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*HYMN #278 UMH – Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Toccata from Suite Gothique (Leon Boëllman)

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, 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. Available Sundays: April 5/19/26.

—**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 or the Courtyard. 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.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of SANTA MONICA
1008 Eleventh Street • Santa Monica, CA 90403
www.santamonicaumc.org 310-393-8258



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

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Deacon Associate for Spiritual Formation
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HOLY WEEK

Today! Palm Sunday

10 a.m. In-Person and Online Worship

The day we celebrate Jesus' Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem, with the waving of palms and loud Hosannas!

Today! Palm Sunday Celebration

After worship in the Courtyard

Brunch/Easter Bunny/Egg Hunt

Following worship, come for a Palm Sunday celebration, hosted by Children and Family Ministries. Featuring an Easter Egg hunt, brunch, games and crafts, a family photo opp, and a visit from the Easter Bunny! Fun for all ages!

Thursday, APRIL 2: Maundy Thursday

6:30 p.m. First UMC Chapel

Command to Love One Another: Remembering Jesus' Last Supper and Washing the Disciples Feet

Good Friday, APRIL 3: Chapel Prayer Vigil

1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Chapel

The First UMC Chapel will be open for prayer.

Good Friday, APRIL 3: Labyrinth Open

1 p.m. – 7 p.m. in Simkins Hall

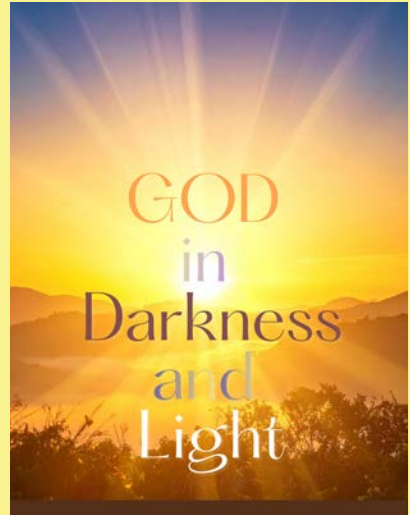
Walking the Labyrinth is an ancient spiritual practice, a way to quiet our minds and open our spirits to the presence of the Holy. Every step a prayer.

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

Good Friday, APRIL 3: Good Friday Ecumenical Service at First UMC

7 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Join Rev. Greg Batson, the First UMC Choir, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and First Presbyterian Church for an ecumenical Good Friday service in the First UMC Sanctuary.



EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 5: Easter Sunrise Service

6:30 a.m. Palisades Park

(Santa Monica Blvd. & Ocean Ave.)

Family-friendly worship, Holy Communion, hot coffee & fellowship. Bring blankets, chairs, and fresh flowers for the cross.

APRIL 5: Easter Celebration Worship

10 a.m. Sanctuary, Livestream

Family Service, Choir, Organ, Easter Flowers, and Alleluias!
(nursery care provided)

www.santamonicaumc.org/lent

UPCOMING EVENTS

• Methodist Foundation Scholarships

The Methodist Foundation of Santa Monica, founded in 1967, exists to provide aid to religious, educational and charitable causes. Every year the First UMC Loans & Scholarships committee acknowledges outstanding scholars, including graduating high school seniors, continuing undergraduates, and graduate students, for their scholastic excellence, commitment to community, and dedication to our church. Calling all First UMC Students! **Save the date:** applications open **Friday, April 10**, for our First UMC students pursuing their educational goals. Deadline to apply is **Monday, May 11, 9 p.m.** Link on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/methodistfoundation

Save the Date for Scholarship Sunday: **June 26.**

• REFLECT Worship

Pastor Greg's worship service "Reflect" continues in April. This is an additional opportunity to come together for worship and sharing in an informal setting. We gather in Simkins Hall at 5 p.m. The service includes a time of prayer and sharing, scripture and reflection, and concludes with Holy Communion. At 6 p.m., you are invited to stay and share in a meal in conjunction with our youth as they gather for their weekly program. This is open to all, and we invite you to join us!

Sunday, April 19, 5 p.m. worship in Simkins Hall, followed by 6 p.m. meal

• April Messy Church

At Messy Church, today's busy families of all shapes and sizes are invited into a welcoming space to experience faith. Messy Church meets once a month. Everyone is welcomed as they are. Whether you are single or partnered, young or old, tidy or messy, have questions or doubts, are filled with joy or struggling with life, you will be welcomed at Messy Church. Together we will explore the theme "Love the World" through crafts and activities, games and songs, story and fun. Come for the whole time or just drop by as you're able.

Saturday, April 25, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. in Simkins Hall

UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.)

• Upward Bound House Home Run for Kids

Our 13th Annual Home Run for Kids is more than just a 5K run—it's a celebration of community, hope, and the power of collective action. Join families, schools, corporate teams, and neighbors who believe that every family and child deserves the stability of housing, dignity, and the chance to thrive. 100% of the funds raised go towards our mission to end family homelessness. Join the First UMC Church and Preschool Team! <https://santamonicaumc.org/home-run-for-kids>
Sunday, April 26, 8 a.m. 11620 San Vicente Blvd
*Meet at 8:15 a.m. at the white First UMC tent for Communion before the race starts!

• Spring Concert

Save the date for our Annual Spring Concert! This year features "Requiem" by Maurice Duruflé, and "St. Saens Organ Symphony #3." Followed by a reception in Simkins Hall.

Sunday, May 17, 4 - 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary

• Family Camp

First UMC invites you to experience Family Camp! Everyone is part of the Church Family. All ages are welcome! The chance to unplug from everyday life and explore the great outdoors, and connect with self and community in a beautiful natural setting.

Friday, May 22 through Sunday, May 24

Camp E.L.K. (YMCA of Orange County)

Cost: \$180/person (2 and under are free), includes all meals (*dietary restrictions can be accommodated*)

For more details, and to register online by

Monday, May 11, visit the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/family-camp

• Messy Camp - Join the waitlist

Coming this summer! Join us for an unforgettable week of adventure at Messy Camp, where kids will explore the beauty and wonder of God's Garden. Grades TK – 5th grade. The cost is \$150 for the first child and \$125 / additional sibling. Registration is full, but you may still join the waitlist: www.santamonicaumc.org/messy-camp

Monday, July 27 – Friday, July 31, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
First UMC Campus

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

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) 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

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

**No meeting tonight*

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, April 1, 10 a.m.** at Literati Cafe

• 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, April 18**

• 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, April 25

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

Theme: Love the World

• Blood Pressure Screenings

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

Next meeting: **April 12, 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.



TWO ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

• 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. 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., but often ends earlier. **April 17, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

• Westside Food Bank Volunteer Opportunity

Every 4th Wednesday March date: **April 22, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.**
1914 14th Street, Santa Monica. Volunteers will pack cases of food for distribution at the Mobile Pantry at Virginia Avenue Park.

To volunteer for either service date, email Keri:

k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org

Order Easter Flowers

Now is the time to dedicate Easter Flowers in honor of a loved one for a small donation. Dedications will be listed in the OOW for the April 5 Easter service. Order flowers online: www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund, or at the Sunday Welcome Table. \$15 per plant.

Deadline to order: Tuesday, March 31



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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