

SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER

I hope you are enjoying this season of new life as we celebrate the Easter season, the 50-day period between Easter Sunday and Pentecost. This is the time when we put our faith into action, sharing the good news of Christ's resurrection in our spiritual life. The season culminates with the observance of Pentecost on May 24th this year, signaling the arrival of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church.

This month begins with World Labyrinth Day on May 1 when you can walk our labyrinth in prayer and meditation. Then join us on May 17 for our annual Spring Concert as our Chancel Choir is joined by other voices from our community and the LA Concert Orchestra to perform Duruflé's *Requiem* and Saint-Saëns' *Organ Symphony #3*. Finally, we offer our additional worship opportunities at the end of the month: Messy Church on May 30, and Reflect on May 31.

However you choose to practice your faith, know that it is not contained in just in your head or heart. Faith is found in our hands and feet as we live it in our lives. May the new life you experience bring new life to others.

Rev. Greg Batson
Senior Minister

WORLD LABYRINTH DAY CELEBRATIONS FOR ALL GENERATIONS!

First UMC Santa Monica, with The Labyrinth Society, will celebrate World Labyrinth Day with opportunities for people of all ages to engage the Labyrinth in Simkins Hall. During our "Family Friendly" hours children and their families can learn about the Labyrinth and engage with it freely through dance, coloring, stories and prayer. From 1–3 p.m., we will host our customary quiet hours for walking and praying. Resources to draw your own labyrinth will also be available.

Every year, World Labyrinth Day is celebrated by thousands of people around the globe. We join this community in a moving meditation for world peace and to celebrate the labyrinth experience. Come join us!

Labyrinth Schedule for Friday, May 1:

- 8:30–9:30 a.m.** Family Friendly Time: The Labyrinth is open for children and families to explore, learn, and walk.
- 1-3 p.m.** The Labyrinth is open for quiet and prayerful walking.
- 3-4 p.m.** Family Friendly Time: The Labyrinth is open with "dancing scarves" and free movement encouraged.



SPRING CONCERT

Don't miss our annual our Annual Spring Concert! This year's program features two major musical works of the 20th century: *Requiem* by Maurice Duruflé and *Organ Symphony No. 3* by Camille Saint-Saëns. The combined musicians of a 60 voice chorus, pipe organ and the Los Angeles Concert Orchestra under the direction of Dr. James Smith will musically fill the church for a truly memorable experience.

The *Requiem*, completed in 1947 is a magnificent blend of ancient Gregorian chants with rich French impressionistic harmonies—one of the most moving and respected works in sacred choral music. The famous *Organ Symphony No. 3*, considered to be a landmark of French Romantic music, featuring thunderous chords from our church's large pipe organ in concert with a full orchestra and 4 hand piano! First UMC organist, Ty Woodward will be featured. Following the concert, please join us for a reception in Simkins Hall as we thank the musicians and gather in celebration and community.



For those who can't attend Sunday night, you may observe the Concert rehearsal Saturday morning (May 16) at 9 a.m. - 12 noon, at no charge. Families with babies/small children may listen from the Narthex.

Sunday, May 17, 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary, followed by a reception in Simkins Hall

MAY *at a glance*



Fri May 1	World Labyrinth Day
Sun May 3	Holy Communion
Thurs May 7	Janet Rawuka memorial
Sun May 10	Mother's Day
Mon May 11	Applications due for Methodist Foundation scholarships
Wed May 13	May Mid-Week Recital
Sat May 16	Spring Concert Rehearsal in Simkins Hall Relay for Life at UCLA Prayer Quilt Workparty The People Concern volunteer day
Sun May 17	Rev. Keri preaching Spring Concert
Mon May 18	Spiritual Gifts II meeting via Zoom
Sun May 24	Pentecost Sunday
Mon May 25	<i>Memorial Day - church campus closed</i>
Wed May 27	Westside Food Bank volunteer day
Sat May 30	Messy Church
Sun May 31	Trinity Sunday Blood Pressure Screenings Youth Group (<i>last meeting before summer</i>) REFLECT worship

METHODIST FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Methodist Foundation of Santa Monica, founded in 1967, exists to provide aid to religious, educational and charitable causes. The Foundation is administered by a volunteer Board of Trustees with First UMC member John Youngman currently serving as president. First UMC has a long tradition of honoring the academic achievements of students in our church and community who pursue post-secondary education.

Every year the 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! Applications are now open for our First UMC students pursuing their educational goals, and will close on **Monday, May 11, 9 p.m.** Link on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/methodistfoundation

Save the Date: Scholarship Sunday: June 28, during worship

“Our church’s ability to support the academic and professional journeys of its students is really special and reflects a commitment to intellectual and spiritual growth as Christians and Methodists. These values that shaped me growing up at First UMC continue to define my work and my life.

- Alejandro Quintana”

MAY ONLINE MID-WEEK RECITAL

First UMC is pleased to present the 2026 May Online Mid-Week Recital featuring **Esther Yune, Susan Kim-Pedroza, 4-hand piano**. Known for her unique tone color and interpretations, **Dr. Esther Yune** has been featured in concerts across the U.S. and internationally, including performances at Jordan Hall with the NEC Symphony Orchestra, the Hochstein Concert Series in Rochester, NY, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria, and UKLIM University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Susan Kim-Pedroza has performed at numerous venues, including Zipper Hall at the Colburn School of Music, the Muckenthaler Cultural Arts Center in Fullerton, Marcee Auditorium at El Camino College, Long Beach City College Auditorium, Westbecker Hall at Pasadena College, Pasadena Presbyterian Church, McKinney Theater at Saddleback College, and Ruth Todd Hall at Long Beach City College.

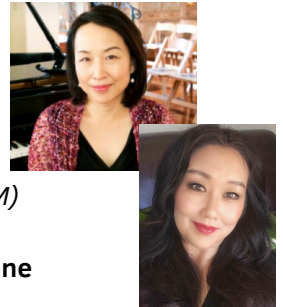
To read full bios and view past recitals, visit the website:

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

How to watch the Livestream:

- Facebook: [@santamonicaumc](https://www.facebook.com/santamonicaumc)
 - YouTube Channel: [@SantaMonicaUMC](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSantaMonicaUMC)
 - Website: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream
 - The First UMC App: (*search FirstUMC_SM*)
- View past recitals on above platforms.

Wednesday, May 13, at 12:10 p.m., online



RELAY FOR LIFE

The Health Ministry Council is excited to announce First UMC is once again supporting the American Cancer Society’s annual Relay for Life at Drake Stadium at UCLA. Relay for Life strives to bring communities together to remember loved ones lost, honor survivors of all cancers, and raise money to help the American Cancer Society make a global impact on cancer. The Health Ministry Council supports this cause for all these important reasons. A special event is the Luminaria walk – to remember those we’ve lost, celebrate cancer survivors, and show everyone affected by cancer that we are the light in the darkness. You may walk at any time for any length during the 12 hour event.

Saturday, May 16

12 p.m. noon to 12 a.m. midnight

UCLA Drake Track and Field Stadium

340 Charles E. Young Dr. W, Los Angeles, 90024

To register or donate to the **First UMC Wesley Walkers**, visit the website: <https://santamonicaumc.org/health-ministry/>



SPIRITUAL GIFTS WORKSHOP PART II

All are invited to attend a workshop designed to explore your personal Spiritual Gifts and how you might engage them more fully! Before attending this **Zoom discussion** please complete this Spiritual Gifts Inventory:

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory/en>.

We hope those who attended the Spiritual Gifts workshop in March, and those who were unable to attend, will join us for this opportunity to learn how to develop and use your Spiritual Gifts in your daily life, within the church and out in the world. **Pastor Greg and Pastor Keri** will lead the discussion and answer questions.

Zoom link for the class found on the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/spiritual-gifts



Monday, May 18, 6 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: May 10/17/24/31



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. The shift is 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., but often ends earlier. Volunteers meet at the church to carpool. Contact Rev. Keri Olsen Paget to volunteer: k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org
Saturday, May 16, 8 a.m.

WESTSIDE FOOD BANK

Westside Food Bank offers a volunteer opportunity every 4th Wednesday of the month. Volunteers will pack cases of food for distribution at the Mobile Pantry at Virginia Avenue Park. Contact Rev. Keri Olsen Paget to volunteer:

k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org

Wednesday, May 27, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
1914 14th Street, Santa Monica



CALLING ALL GRADUATES!

First UMC wants to recognize all its graduates. Let us know where you're graduating from, your major, and what your future plans are. **Deadline: Monday, May 18.** Contact Sarah Rold in the church office: (310-393-8258 x 106 or s.rolld@santamonicaumc.org)



MAY 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 "Fill a Bucket" through crafts and activities, games and songs, story and fun. Come for the whole time or just drop by as you're able.

Saturday, May 30, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
in Simkins Hall

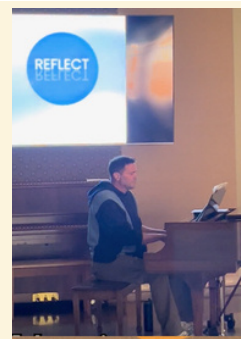


REFLECT WORSHIP

Pastor Greg's worship service "Reflect" continues in May. 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, a reflection on a classic work of art, 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, May 31, 5 p.m. worship in Simkins Hall, followed by 6 p.m. meal



Scenes from April's Reflect Worship with Pastor Greg

FIRST UMC MEMBERSHIP

Membership is a celebration of the fact that someone belongs to our faith community in connection and commitment. It promotes service to and with each other, values mutual care, and develops meaningful and supportive relationships. Becoming a member of First UMC is an act of publicly entering into a relationship with our faith community. At First UMC, we belong to God and to one another. If you have questions on becoming a member of First UMC, you may contact: Rev. Greg Batson (g.batson@santamonicaumc.org), Rev. Keri Olsen Paget (k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org), Tricia Guerrero (t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org), or call the church office: (310) 393-8258.

Looking forward to

- **Sunday, June 7: Preschool Spring Fair**
Save the date and stay after worship for our Annual Preschool Spring Fair. Fun for all ages! More details coming soon.
- **Sunday, June 14: YSP Commissioning during worship and Sizzle and Service Bash after worship**
The Youth Service Project team will be commissioned (blessed) during worship, followed by a picnic fundraiser in the Courtyard.
- **June 17 - 20: Cal-Pac Annual Conference**
With the theme "Ending Spiritual & Physical Hunger: Astonish!" the 42nd Annual Session of the California-Pacific Conference will be held at the La Quinta Resort and Club in La Quinta, CA.



- **Scholarship Sunday: June 28, during worship**
As the school year draws to a close, the young scholars of First UMC are excited about their next educational step. Make sure to attend the 10 a.m. worship service to honor and recognize those being awarded with a Methodist Foundation Scholarship.



Palm Sunday: 10 a.m. worship followed by a celebration luncheon and the Easter Bunny!



SIZZLE AND SERVICE BASH

Fire up your summer spirit and join us for the Sizzle & Service Bash! The Youth Service Project Team is taking over the Church Courtyard for a classic BBQ—think sizzling burgers and hot dogs (+veggie options), all the fixin's, and some homemade desserts to top it off. Grab a lemonade and enjoy summer yard games with your friends while the kids jump for joy in the bounce house.

Every ticket supports our youth group's summer service trip to Johnson County, TN, where we will repair homes in Central Appalachia, helping to make them warmer, safer, and drier for families and elderly residents in need.

- **Tickets:**
\$30 for adults / \$15 for kids / \$75 for a family
FUMC Preschool Family Discount - \$50/family
- Purchase tickets online:
<https://santamonicaumc.org/ysp>

Sunday, June 14, after worship in the Courtyard





Community News

MEMORIALS

- A memorial for First UMC member **Janet Rawuka** will be held Thursday, May 7, in the Chapel.

DEATHS

- First UMC member **Berneice Bossi Southcott** died April 19, 2026.
- First UMC member **Thomas Dewey Weese** died April 21, 2026.
- First UMC member **Alan Curtis Mead** died April 21, 2026

BIRTH

- **Peyton Lou Holman** was born April 16, 2026, to First UMC member Dylan and Dakota Holman.

THANK YOU!

- We give heartfelt thanks to Spiritual Formation Committee leader **Mary Crawford** as she steps down from her faithful service organizing the Advent and Lenten devotional booklets for the past 18 years. From recruiting writers and assigning scriptures to editing each devotion, Mary's dedication has been a true gift to this meaningful seasonal project.



CELEBRATING NEW MEMBERS

- On Sunday, April 19, we welcomed new members: (upperleft clockwise) **Ming Lee Gamberg, Tania Trotter Batson, Nolan Allen Frank, Anelise Machado De Assis**



Welcome

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY COLLABORATIVE (CYFC)

May is Foster Care Awareness Month, and the Children, Youth and Family Collaborative (CYFC) one of First UMC's mission partners, is inviting you to walk with them! Join them for the **CYFC Foster Care Awareness 5K Wellness Walk & Resource Fair**—a community walk to raise awareness for foster youth in Los Angeles and generate direct support for their needs.

Saturday, May 16, 8 a.m.

Check-in: Dorsey High School, 3537 Farmdale Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90016

Walk at 8 a.m.: Casual community walk around the track at Dorsey High School track

After the walk: Wellness Resource Fair with local health and social service vendors

Registration is free, and every dollar donated goes directly to supporting foster youth in our community.

Register to walk on the website:

<https://santamonicaumc.org/outreach-missions>

If you can't attend the walk, you may **donate directly to CYFC** here: <https://www.cyfcla.com/support>



CITY OF SANTA MONICA: TAKE A MOMENT - AN UNPLUGGED EVENT & DAY OF REST

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month and National Water Safety Month, this site-wide event brings together a range of offerings designed to support your well-being, reflection, and connection. Offerings include: Plant Therapy; WHALE Tales with coloring books and stickers available for you and your family to enjoy together; Art Making with Artist in Residence Seda Saar; Floating & Water Safety Workshops; Sound Bath, and more.

Some workshops have limited capacity, so RSVP for any activities you'd like to attend.



For see scheduled of events and RSVP:

<https://www.santamonica.gov/events/45mejz1dm0t4ds6pvq5s0yggcf/202605021300>

Saturday, May 2, 1 p.m. - 6 p.m. Annenberg Community Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Highway, SM 90402



Community Photos



Easter Sunday (Left to right) Easter Sunrise Service at Palisades Park; Easter 10 a.m. worship



The Spirit Sisters, led by Dorothy Bimber Worley, held their annual Retreat at Poverello Retreat House in San Fernando.



Tricia Guerrero held a meeting for the All-Church Service Trip, who will be serving in the Navajo Nation in Arizona



Listening Hearts Women's Group continues to gather for relaxed, bi-monthly coffee meet-ups at Literati Cafe.



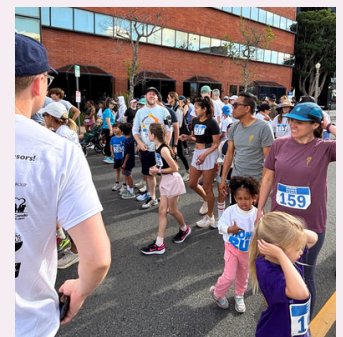
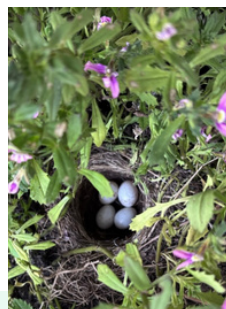
A special appreciation for our ushers was held on Sunday, April 26.



April's Messy Church celebrated the theme "Love the World"



PRESCHOOL CORNER



First UMC's Church and Preschool team at the Westside Food Bank Home Run for Kids 5k.

The Preschool celebrated Earth Day with a much-anticipated visit from the garbage truck; upon return from Spring Break, teachers were delighted to discover a tiny nest tucked into one of the planters—with four little eggs inside, all of which successfully hatched!

WORSHIP



*Reception of
New Members
on Sunday,
April 19.*

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.

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 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. 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

Contact Jamie (j.jones@santamonicaumc.org) for more info.

Website: 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. Meetings are on Sundays from 6 - 8 p.m. 3rd Floor Edu. Bldg. in the Youth Lounge. Contact Tricia with questions:

t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

May Meetings: May 3/17/31

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 join, call the church office: 310-393-8258.

Tuesdays: 7 a.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/

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

Meeting dates:

Wednesday, May 6 & 20, Coffee & Connect,
10 a.m. Literati Cafe (12081 Wilshire Blvd)

Wednesday, May 13, 10 a.m. via Zoom

THE CHANCEL CHOIR

Sing in the Chancel Choir! **Thursday evening rehearsals are 7:40 - 9 p.m.** Contact Jim Smith if you are interested:

djes@roadrunner.com

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! Next Screening:

Sunday, May 31, 11 a.m. 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.
- Next Meeting: Saturday, May 16, 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: 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



MEET THE TEAM BEHIND FIRST UMC!

Welcome to the eighth installment of our monthly Staff Spotlight series! Each month, we 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.

Rev. Keri Olsen Paget, Deacon Associate

Rev. Keri Olsen Paget is an Ordained Deacon in the UMC. As the Deacon Associate for Spiritual Formation, Keri promotes and cultivates opportunities for others to deepen their awareness of themselves and their connection with the divine and community. Her gifts and interests are in teaching, listening, individual or communal spiritual care and reflection. She assists with worship twice a month.

Keri grew up in Southern California. She is a graduate from Emory Candler School of Theology. She has worked primarily as a hospital chaplain and ACPE Clinical Pastoral Education Certified Educator since 2011. This means she trains clergy and lay people in spiritual care skills and the profession of chaplaincy. She has worked for hospitals in Atlanta, GA; UCLA Health in Los Angeles, CA; Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore, MD; and PIH Health in Downey, CA.

Keri and her husband, Josh, have a young daughter named Elizabeth. Keri enjoys riding bikes and playing make believe with her family. To nourish her soul, Keri likes to create – whether that be through prayer, painting, cooking, dancing, gardening or developing new spiritual/reflective practices with others.