

SENTINEL

NEWSLETTER

The arts have always been an important element of Christian spirituality. We make connections to God through our creativity such as music, the visual arts, theater, and dance. We have a rich tradition of ministry in the arts here at Santa Monica First UMC. We feature visual art exhibits throughout the year in the Fireside Room. Our worship features great choral music by our Chancel Choir and classical organ works by Ty Woodward. As we enter the fall season, there are a couple of opportunities that I wish to highlight.

The first is the return of live performances of our music recitals. Beginning this month, we will host guest musicians each month in our sanctuary featuring a variety of instrumentalists. These are free of charge and are open to the community, so we encourage you to invite others. These performances will continue to be livestreamed and recorded for online viewing as well.

Our All Community Theatre (ACT) program will present *The Cottages - Scenes from Lives Interrupted* on Sunday, September 27, at 1 p.m. In observance of World Alzheimer's Awareness, the play addresses the many forms of memory issues. There will be an opportunity to share following the performance, led by a representative from the Alzheimer's Association.

Let the arts be another way that you connect with God.

Rev. Greg Batson
Senior Minister



SCENES FROM LIVES INTERRUPTED

ALL COMMUNITY THEATER PRESENTS THE COTTAGES: SCENES FROM LIVES INTERRUPTED

In observance of World Alzheimer's Awareness Day, All Community Theater (ACT) presents the world premiere of *The Cottages: Scenes from Lives Interrupted*.

Written by Stephen Hauk, the poetic play deals with many forms of memory issues, not only Alzheimer's. It is a true look at life in a memory care home where the residents are treated with compassion and understanding, and the rich stories and humanity that emerge as a result.

The free performance will be followed by a discussion between the audience, the cast, and representative Monica Moore, M.S.G, from the Alzheimer's Association. Refreshments and useful resources will be provided as well.

Sunday, September 27, 1 p.m. Simkins Hall
Followed by refreshments and discussion

SATURDAY RECITALS

First UMC of Santa Monica is excited to announce the return of our **in-person recital series!** Presented by Dr. James E. Smith, First UMC Music Director, these **free** recitals take place **one Saturday each month at 1 p.m.**, with doors opening at 12:45 p.m.

If you can't join us in person, you can also watch the recital via livestream during the performance or anytime afterward:

- Website: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream
- Facebook: @santamonicaumc
- YouTube: @SantaMonicaUMC
- The First UMC App: (App Store, search FirstUMC_SM)

2026-27 SCHEDULE

SATURDAYS 1 P.M.

Sept 26	Dr. James Lent, piano
Oct 17	Gold Line Saxophone Quartet
Nov 21	Seraphour, quartet
Jan 9	Kenton Youngstrom, guitar
Feb 20	Philip Levy, violin; Tae Yeon, piano
Mar 13	Jon Miller and Doug Amster, 4-hand piano
Apr 17	Aaron Shows, organ

September *at a glance*

Fri Sept 4	Walk the Labyrinth/Chapel Open
Sun Sept 6	Rev. Greg Batson preaching, Holy Communion United Women in Faith Ice Cream Social
Mon Sept 7	<i>Labor Day, church campus closed</i>
Sat Sept 12	Messy Church: The Gift to Create
Sun Sept 13	Rev. Greg Batson preaching Sierra Service Project Report Back & Luncheon Youth Kick-Off
Sat Sept 19	Prayer Quilt Ministry Workparty Homeboy Industries 5k
Sun Sept 20	Rev. Greg Batson preaching Reception of New Members
Wed Sept 23	Westside Food Bank volunteer day
Sat Sept 26	Saturday Recital with Dr. James Lent
Sun Sept 27	Moment for Mission: Rev. Jennifer Oliver from Epworth Farm ACT performance "The Cottages" REFLECT worship

WALK THE LABYRINTH

The First UMC 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. Children and families welcome! The Chapel is also open for prayer during this time.

Friday, September 4, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Simkins Hall & Chapel

UWF ICE CREAM SOCIAL

The United Women in Faith are hosting an Ice Cream social after worship on **Sunday, September 6**. Stay after church to enjoy fellowship and an end-of-summer treat!



MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church resumes in September with an all age monthly worship experience that explores God's love in an accessible way. At Messy Church, today's busy families of all shapes and sizes are invited into a welcoming space to experience faith. 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.

**2nd Saturdays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
September 12 – The Gift to Create**



SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT REPORT BACK

The Sierra Service Project Intergenerational Team is excited to share their experiences at the upcoming Report Back! This all-ages team worked with the Teec Nos Pos Chapter of the Navajo Nation in Arizona. Stay after worship on Sunday, September 13, to hear about the team's experiences.

Sunday, September 13, after worship in Simkins Hall



2026 HOMEBOY 5K RUN/WALK

Join Homeboy Industries and 5,000+ runners, walkers, volunteers, and families for their 17th Annual Homeboy 5K Run/Walk through historic Downtown Los Angeles! They'll begin the morning filled with energetic vibes, joy and laughter outside our Chinatown headquarters and end with a street celebration featuring artists, partners and vendors from across the city.

Your partnership with the Homeboy 5K Run/Walk supports the work of Homeboy to continue our mission to provide training and support to formerly gang-involved and previously incarcerated people, allowing them to redirect their lives and become contributing members of our community.

Race day includes:

6 – 8 a.m. Packet Pick Up
7 – 11 a.m. Expo/Festival
8:30 a.m. – 5K Race Starts
9:30 a.m. – Puppy Fades Doggy Dash
10 a.m. – Kids Run Starts
11 a.m. – Event Concludes



Sign up or donate to team Wilson's Walkers, First UMC member David Wilson's team:

www.santamonicaumc.org/homeboy5k

Saturday, September 19, see schedule above

WESTSIDE FOOD BANK VOLUNTEER DAY

Join First UMC for a volunteer opportunity every 4th Wednesday of the month at Westside Food Bank! Volunteers will pack cases of food or distribution at the Mobile Pantry at Virginia Avenue Park. Contact Rev. Keri Olsen Paget to volunteer: k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org
Wednesday, September 23, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
1914 14th Street, Santa Monica



SATURDAY RECITALS: SEPTEMBER

First UMC is excited to present the first of the 2026 September Saturday **IN-PERSON** Recitals featuring **Dr. James Lent, piano**. Dr. Lent attended the Houston High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and the University of Houston. Since completing a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Yale University, he has been based in Los Angeles, CA. James is currently on the faculty of UCLA as the head of collaborative piano and vocal coach for the music department. He also serves as program manager of staff pianists. James is also a Principal Music Faculty, musical director, and manager of staff pianists at AMDA, the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in Hollywood, CA. He has also served on the summer faculty at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, CA, as a pianist and opera coach for the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, and the Napa Music Festival.

To read full bio, see the upcoming 2026-27 recital schedule, and view past recitals, visit the website:

www.santamonicaumc.org/recital-series

If you can't join us in person, you can also watch the recital via livestream during the performance or anytime afterward:

- 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: (App Store, search FirstUMC_SM)

Saturday, September 26, 1 p.m. Doors open at 12:45 p.m. in the First UMC Sanctuary. Free admission.



MOMENT FOR MISSION: EPWORTH FARM LA

On Sunday, September 27, the **Rev. Jennifer Oliver** will join us for worship and coffee hour to share about the meaningful ministry of Epworth Farm LA. Epworth Farm is a 9,500 square foot property located in South LA and operated by Saint Mark UMC. Its mission is to increase the awareness and involvement in urban agriculture, promote a culture of food sovereignty that will mitigate food insecurity in Black and Brown neighborhoods; decrease the incidence of diet related diseases in South LA by increasing fruit and vegetable consumption in participant households; and foster connections and relationships within the local food system.

Our Methodist Foundation of Santa Monica contributed as a funding partner to this ministry and we want to support its success. Come learn how God is at work through this ministry and how you might participate.

<https://epworthfarmla.churchcenter.com/home>

Sunday, September 27, during 10 a.m. worship



REFLECT WORSHIP

Join Pastor Greg's monthly worship service "Reflect." All are welcome to this is additional opportunity to come together for worship and sharing in an informal setting. We gather this month in the Chapel 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 community meal.

Sunday, September 27, 5 p.m. worship in the Chapel, followed by 6 p.m. meal

REFLECT
BEEFECT

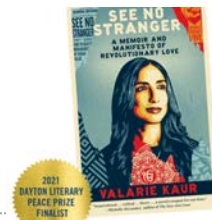
CAL-PAC INTERRELIGIOUS BOOK STUDY

Hosted by the Cal-Pac Annual Conference Council on Christian Unity and Interreligious Relations, our goal is to bring together people of different life experience and create a welcoming space to listen, question, and learn from one another. We will be reading and discussing Valarie Kaur's book, "See No Stranger." This is open to everyone in the community no matter their faith tradition. **Meets the first Tuesday of September, October, November, and December at 6 p.m. Pacific Time on Zoom.**

We will discuss different chapters of the book at each session, so we hope you can attend all 4 sessions (not mandatory.)

Register on the website:

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/interreligious-book-study--2026>



SIGN UP NOW

ABIDE: A MEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT

"Abide in me as I abide in you." — John 15:4

Abide is a weekend retreat designed to help men reconnect with God, themselves, and one another. Together, we'll explore what it means to abide in Christ in the ordinary rhythms of everyday life. Through worship, prayer, reflection, honest conversation, and spiritual practices, participants will explore ways to deepen their relationship with God. Just as importantly, Abide is an invitation into deeper kinship. We hope to create space for participants to begin building relationships marked by trust, encouragement, and prayer with one another. Because following Jesus was never meant to be a solitary journey.

Abide in Christ. Go deeper with one another. Live connected.

Friday, November 6 – Sunday, November 8, 2026

Mary and Joseph Retreat Center in Rancho Palos Verdes

For details and to register, visit the website:

<https://santamonicaumc.org/abide-a-mens-weekend-retreat/>



CELEBRATING MESSY CAMP 2026!

by Jamie Jones, Family Ministries Coordinator

From July 27 – 31, 2026, our church was filled with laughter, learning, and lots of messy fun as we welcomed 48 campers to Messy Camp! Throughout the week, campers discovered what it means to grow in the Fruits of the Spirit—Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. Each day, they experienced Bible stories through interactive storytelling, played exciting games, created meaningful crafts, sang joyful songs, and explored hands-on science activities that connected faith with curiosity and discovery. From building colorful density towers and making kindness flowers to designing egg-drop creations and watching Coke and Mentos erupt, every activity reminded us that God helps each of us grow in unique and wonderful ways.

One of the most meaningful parts of the week was learning about our mission partner, Westside Food Bank. Campers discovered how a community can work together to care for neighbors experiencing food insecurity and learned that even small acts of generosity can make a big difference.

We are thrilled to share that our campers have already raised **\$2,488 for Westside Food Bank!** Through lemonade, popsicle, ice cream, and watermelon stands, going door to door, asking relatives and friends for support, and even completing extra chores at home, our campers put their faith into action. It was inspiring to watch them take initiative, serve with compassion, and discover that they can make a real difference in the lives of others. Even more exciting, many of our campers are continuing their fundraising efforts and are still hosting lemonade stands to support this important ministry.



Messy Camp would not have been possible without our incredible team of 16 counselors and volunteers. Every counselor is a member of our church family or one of the amazing youth from our youth group. Their enthusiasm, kindness, patience, and leadership created a welcoming environment where every camper could learn, grow, and have fun.

Thank you to everyone who prayed for Messy Camp, donated supplies, volunteered, and supported our campers throughout the week. Your encouragement helped make this ministry a wonderful success.

We are grateful for the ways God continues to work through the children and families of our church, and we can't wait to see what this year brings!

YOUTH SERVICE PROJECT REFLECTION

by John Buxton, Youth Counselor



This summer marked my fourth YSP trip, but my first serving as a youth counselor. Having just graduated from Duke University in North Carolina, I have spent the past four years exploring and falling in love with the Appalachian region. What has always stood out to me most are the people. The hospitality, kindness, and sense of community I have experienced throughout Appalachia have made this region incredibly meaningful to me. I was especially grateful for the opportunity to give back to a community that has welcomed me over the past four years, while doing so alongside members of my home church community at FUMC Santa Monica.

I have always felt closest to God when I am serving others, and YSP has become one of my favorite ways to live out that part of my faith. Each trip has reminded me that service is about much more than the work we accomplish on a home. It is about the relationships we build, the stories we hear, and the opportunity to show up for one another with humility and compassion. Returning this year as a youth counselor gave me the chance to experience YSP from a new perspective and to lead our church's youth in exploring some of the same meaning in service that I have found over the years.

I am deeply grateful for the homeowners and communities who welcomed us, the FUMC family I served alongside, my fellow youth counselors, and the chance to return to a region that has become such an important part of my life. This trip was a meaningful way to close one chapter of my life while carrying forward the lessons of faith, service, and community that the Appalachian region has given me. *(See trip photos of the Youth on page 6)*

BAPTISM

- **Oliver Weldon Smith** was baptized on Sunday, August 16, by Rev. Greg Batson.



DEATHS

- First UMC member Mike Eskridge's father, **Earl Eskridge**, died June 29, 2026.
- First UMC member Jeff Jones' mother, **Harriet Jones**, died July 3, 2026.
- First UMC member Leigh Erlandson's sister, **Shelly Hoffman**, died July 29, 2026.
- We give thanks for the life and life everlasting of First UMC constituent **Hilda Rosemary Bickel**, who died August 11, 2026.
- First UMC member and Music Director Jim Smith's sister, **Rhoda Brooks**, died August 14, 2026.
- First UMC member **Mary Lois Roney** died August 25, 2026.

MOVING

- Pastor **Kurt Poland**, former First UMC associate and youth pastor, and recent pastor at First German United Methodist Church of Glendale, moved to a new assignment to University Park United Methodist Church in Denver. If you would like to reach out to him, his new email is: kpoland@uparkumc.org.



Kurt with wife Katie, and sons Jean-Luke, and Hezekiah

FIRST UMC MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: JEAN STAPELTON

The LA Times featured First UMC member **Jean Stapleton** in the article, *East Los Angeles' journalism maestro recalls exile, triumph and a lasting legacy*, on June 27, 2026.

From the Times: "After more than five decades at East Los Angeles College, journalism professor Jean Stapleton found herself this week packing up trophies, plaques and newspaper clips that documented the many journalism awards and blockbuster stories she helped shepherd as advisor to the college's 81-year old student-run outlet, Campus News...."

To read the full LA Times article, pick up a printed copy available at the Sunday Welcome Table, or call the church office for a pdf to be emailed to you:

info@santamonicaumc.org



THANK YOU FROM UPWARD BOUND HOUSE

"On behalf of Upward Bound House and the families we serve, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your generous donation of 25 backpacks with school supplies. Your support is making a real difference in the lives of families and children we serve. At Upward Bound House, we believe that permanent housing is the key to helping families achieve their career and academic aspirations. Since 1990, we have proudly assisted over 2,900 families and more than 5,200 children in their transition from homelessness to stable, permanent housing.

Thanks to donors like you, our mission to end family homelessness in Los Angeles continues to thrive. You are an essential part of the Upward Bound House family, and we couldn't make such a profound impact without your support. Once again, thank you for helping us change lives."

Thanks to the Sunday School teachers and children for assembling the backpacks that were donated to Upward Bound House. We give thanks to the United Women in Faith, whose generous donation funded the supplies.



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: September 13/20/27

Looking forward to **October**

Sat Oct 3	Blessing of the Animals/Art Exhibit opens
Sun Oct 4	Prayer Vigil
Sat Oct 10	Messy Church
Sat Oct 17	October Saturday Recital
Sun Oct 18	Laity Sunday
	Art Talk with Larry Naylor
Sat Oct 24	UWFaith Women's Tea
Sun Oct 25	Legacy Circle Recognition
Sat Oct 31	Tour of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels, including the John Nava Tapestries

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

We look forward to our 19th Annual Blessing of the Animals! Featuring: Walk-Up blessings in the First UMC Courtyard; Kids can bring stuffed loviies to be blessed.

New this year! View beautiful animal photography by Larry Naylor, with an artist talk scheduled for Sunday, October 18 after worship. Don't miss this annual tradition! Saturday, October 3, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., Courtyard



Community Photos



A few scenes from the Youth Service Project, working with ASP in Johnson County, Tennessee. Read Youth Counselor John Buxton's report on page 4.

The SSP intergenerational service trip took place at the Teec Nos Pos Chapter of the Navajo Nation in Arizona.



United Women in Faith Christmas in July!



More scenes from Messy Camp. Read Family Ministries and Messy Camp coordinator Jamie Jones' report on page 4.



Volunteer day at The People Concern, assembling sandwiches.



PRESCHOOL CORNER



Taylor Spearman

First UMC Preschool is excited to welcome new Preschool Co-Director **Taylor Spearman**. Taylor will work along-side Dane Rold, Preschool Co-Director.

Taylor brings 11 years of experience in Early Childhood Education, including four years in the classroom and seven years in leadership. Throughout her career, she has served in many roles—teacher, coordinator, instructional coach, assistant director, curriculum specialist, health and safety director, center director and now Co-Director. Much of her experience has focused on supporting educators, strengthening school communities, and creating meaningful experiences for children and families. Taylor earned her B.A. in Early Childhood Education with a concentration in Trauma Studies from Pacific Oaks College in April 2023 and will complete her M.A. in Organizational Leadership and Management at Pacific Oaks College this December (2026).

Taylor is also a proud mom to her son, Treux, who attends First UMC Preschool. She is excited to be part of the First UMC community and looks forward to building meaningful relationships with its children, families, educators and church community.

WORSHIP



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

Char Smith will be baking the bread for Communion Sunday in September. Thank you 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 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

The Youth Ministry at First UMC is a welcoming community of youth and adult volunteers who gather each week to explore, grow, and live out their faith together. Youth Group meets on Sunday evenings from 6 –8 p.m. in the Youth Lounge on the third floor of the Education Building, where we gather for a meal, games, discussion, and a program. **Youth Kick-Off:**

Sunday, September 13 in the Youth Lounge.

Questions? t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

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/

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, and 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

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, September 2 & 16, 10 a.m. at Literati Cafe, 12081 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles

Wednesday, September 9, 10 a.m. via Zoom



THE CHANCEL CHOIR

The Chancel Choir provides music every Sunday during the 10 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Service. Sing in the Choir!

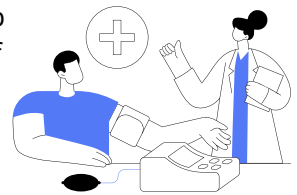
Thursday evening rehearsals will resume September 10.

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 Screenings:

**Sunday, September 20,
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: Saturdays, September 19, 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.premier@santamonicaumc.org or (310)393-8258 ext 103.

www.santamonicaumc.org/health-ministry

HAITI PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

by Todd Erlandson, Haiti Team Leader

We recently received photos and updates from our partners in Haiti, including the communities of Yvon and Sobier. The clinics continue to provide essential healthcare services, bringing medical care to families who might otherwise have little or no access to it.

We also received news from the community micro-credit banks, which recently held their semiannual refinance day. These locally managed lending groups continue to support small businesses and provide families with opportunities to improve their economic well-being.

We are grateful for the ongoing partnership between our congregation and the people of Yvon and Sobier. Thank you for your continued prayers and support for this important ministry.

