

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WORSHIP

15th Sunday after Pentecost • Holy Communion • September 6, 2026

WE GATHER



Changed by Community
by Anna Strickland
@A Sanctified Art

WELCOME

Rev. Keri Olsen Paget, Deacon Associate

PRELUDE The Peace May Be Exchanged *from* Rubrics (Dan Locklair) Ty Woodward, organ

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN** #559 United Methodist Hymnal – Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Glenda Martinez, Lay Leadership Team

(from Psalm 149)

Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song;

Sing God's praise in the assembly of the faithful!

Let us praise God's name with dance;

Let us sing God's praise with drum and lyre!

Let the faithful celebrate with glory, let us shout with joy!

Praise the Lord!

***CHORAL ACT OF PRAISE**

"Cry out, and shout, ye people of God! The Lord is strength and song. Cry out, and shout, ye people of God!"

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Glenda Martinez

Please greet those worshipping near you.

**Asterisks indicate standing if you are able.*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Jamie Jones, Family Ministries Coordinator

#2233 The Faith We Sing — Where Children Belong

This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshiping 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 Preschool playground.

OUR MISSION & COMMON LIFE

Tricia Guerrero, Pastoral Associate

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

Thanks be to God!

SILENT PRAYER & PASTORAL PRAYER

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 GOSPEL Matthew 18:15-20

Larry Wilson, Lay Lector

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

HOMILY "Where Two or Three Are Gathered"

Rev. Greg Batson, Senior Minister

WE RESPOND

WE OFFER OUR GIFTS & OURSELVES

Larry Wilson

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

Cornerstone (Shawn Kirchner)

The Chancel Choir/Dr. Jim Smith, Music Director

Vera Lugo and Andrew Pringle, soloists

Refrain: O the stone that the builders rejected became the cornerstone of a whole new world. A grain of wheat may be knocked to the ground and suffer through the winter's cold, only to rise right up again and bear its seed a thousand fold. Refrain. Never can our journey fail; a little child will lead the way, whose eyes are filled with a shining light, to whom the night is bright as day. Refrain. The love that rolls the stone away gives us life that we may sing "Grave, where is thy victory? Death, O death, where is thy sting?" Refrain.

*RESPONSE #94 UMH – The Doxology

*UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Glenda Martinez

Reconciling God, you mark our lives not with fear, but with mercy, and you gather us into a people shaped by grace. Receive these gifts as signs of our trust in your saving power and our commitment to your work of healing and restoration. Use what we offer to mend what is broken, welcome those who feel outside, and build a community where forgiveness and hope have the final word. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Rev. Batson

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

#632 UMH – Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

#617 UMH – I Come with Joy

#628 UMH – Eat This Bread

UNISON PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Rev. Olsen Paget

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

*HYMN #557 UMH – Blest Be the Tie That Binds

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Batson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE The Strong Tower Postlude *A Mighty Fortress* (Mathias Nagel)

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 Preschool Playground.

—**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.

—**The Chancel Choir:** During the summer months the Chancel Choir is singing some of their favorite anthems from the prior year. We hope they are your favorites also.

—**Flowers:** To order flowers to remember or honor a loved one for Sunday Worship service, go to: www.santamonicaumc.org/flower-fund. Available Sundays: September 13/20/27.

—**This Sunday's Flowers:** "In honor and memory of Jim Smith's sister, Rhoda Brooks, who died on August 14. She almost made it to her 91st birthday on September 4." From Jim and Barbara Smith.

—**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. To see list of preferred items, visit the website: www.santamonicaumc.org/hunger-walk.

—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
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Deacon Associate for Spiritual Formation
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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
1008 Eleventh Street • Santa Monica, CA 90403
www.santamonicaumc.org 310-393-8258





Today! United Women in Faith Ice Cream Social

The UWFaith are hosting their second annual Ice Cream social after worship today. Stay after church to enjoy fellowship and an end-of-summer treat. Thanks to the United Women in Faith!

Today after worship in the Courtyard



SUNDAY, SEPT 13
AFTER WORSHIP/SIMKINS HALL

Sierra Service Project Report Back and Luncheon

Come to the All-Church Service Trip SSP Team Report Back! This year was special as we participated in SSP's intergenerational program, creating an opportunity for all ages in our church family to serve side-by-side, sharing faith and building community. The team worked the Teec Nos Pos Chapter of the Navajo Nation in Arizona. Stay after worship next Sunday to hear about the team's experiences.

Sunday, September 13, after worship in Simkins Hall



September Messy Church

Messy Church is excited to be back for the fall! At Messy Church, today's busy families of all shapes and sizes are invited into a welcoming space to experience faith. Messy Church meets on the second Saturday of the month, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Everyone is welcomed as they are. Engage in activities, crafts and games that bring the month's biblical story to life. Join in a short celebration worship with an interactive bible story, music and prayer. Come for the whole time or just drop by as you're able. Theme: *The Gift to Create*

Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. in the Preschool large play yard



Saturday 1 p.m. Recitals: In-person and Livestreamed

First UMC is excited to present the first of the 2026 Saturday **IN-PERSON** Recitals featuring **Dr. James Lent, piano**. Since completing a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Yale University, Dr. Lent 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. 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 • YouTube Channel: @SantaMonicaUMC • Website: www.santamonicaumc.org/livestream

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

Free admission.

UPCOMING EVENTS

• 2026 Homeboy Industries 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.

For more details, to sign up or donate to team Wilson's Walkers, First UMC member David Wilson's team, visit:

www.santamonicaumc.org/homeboy5k

Saturday, September 19, race begins at 8:30 a.m.

• ACT 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 Hawk, 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 also be provided following the performance.

Sunday, September 27, 1 p.m. Simkins Hall

• REFLECT Worship

All are welcome to REFLECT, an additional opportunity to come together for worship and sharing in an informal setting. We gather 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 2, 5 p.m. worship in the *Chapel, (*note space change this month) followed by 6 p.m. meal in the Fireside Room

MISSION AND SERVICE

TWO ONGOING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

• The People Concern

Schedule is changing - New work day coming soon!

Linda Diane Anderson runs a volunteer group at The People Concern, making sandwiches and assembling sack lunches. Volunteers meet at the church to carpool.

• Westside Food Bank

Every 4th Wednesday

Wednesday, Sept 23, 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 Ave Park.

To volunteer, email Pastor Keri:

k.olsenpaget@santamonicaumc.org.

• Westside Food Bank Food Donations

First UMC collects 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. Thank you!

• Social Justice and the UMC

The United Methodist Church website offers information on a range of social justice topics. From the website, "We believe our call isn't simply to go to church. We believe our call is to be church. By being the church, we can provide community and support for the hurting, hopeless and marginalized. What are you passionate about? Caring for refugees? Fighting systems of poverty? Establishing better relationships between one group and another? Explore the website for ideas in becoming a part of movements that seek to overcome the systems that leave us feeling like we live in a broken world." Visit: <https://www.umc.org/en/rethink-church/topics/changing-the-world>

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.

• First UMC Preschool

The First UMC Preschool is a place where each child learns naturally through play and exploration in a stimulating environment that promotes physical, mental, emotional, social, creative and spiritual growth. To learn more, visit the website: 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. **They are on Summer break, returning Sunday, September 13, 6 p.m. Youth Lounge.**

Questions: t.guerrero@santamonicaumc.org

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!

Next opportunity: Friday, October 2, 1 - 3 p.m.

Visit the website for full schedule:

www.santamonicaumc.org/labyrinth

• Prayer Requests

The Prayer Chain is a network of persons who pray in response to prayer requests. Members of the Prayer Chain treat all requests as confidential. You may send a prayer request to the church at any time. Our Prayer Chain will be notified of your request. Fill out the form online:

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.

Wednesday, September 9, 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, September 19**

• 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 in joining: djes@roadrunner.com

• Messy Church

An all age worship experience that explores God's love in an accessible way. Meets in the Fall on the second Saturdays. Next meeting: **Saturday, September 12, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Simkins Hall/Courtyard**

Details: www.santamonicaumc.org/messychurch

• Blood Pressure Screenings

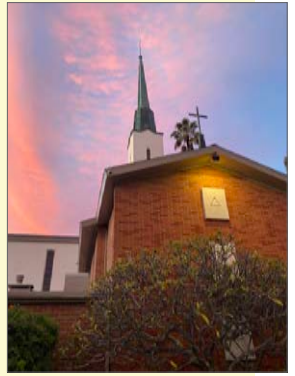
The Health Ministry Council provides free Blood Pressure Screenings once a month after worship. Next meeting: **Sunday, September 20**, in the Alcove.

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.



Upcoming Events in October

Join First UMC for a weekend focused on peace, and guided by
"The Prayer For Peace" by St. Francis of Assisi:



Walk the Labyrinth: Extended Hours in Oct

Labyrinth walking is a spiritual practice that involves following a single, winding path to the center and back out again - a purposeful path used for centering, contemplation, and prayer. In October, additional hours will be added from 5 - 7 p.m. to focus on praying for peace and justice.

**Friday, October 2, 1- 3 p.m., and
5 - 7 p.m. in Simkins Hall**

Vigil for Just Peace at First UMC

You're invited to a Prayer Vigil for Just Peace, **hosted here at FUMC Santa Monica** in partnership with the Westside Mission Area United Methodist Churches. We will gather in prayer, lament and community so that we may be instruments of God's peace in our world.

**Sunday, October 4, 4 p.m.
First UMC campus**

Blessing of the Animals and Art Exhibit

We look forward to our 19th Annual Blessing of the Animals! Featuring: Walk-Up blessings in the First UMC Courtyard; Kids can bring stuffed lovin's 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 celebrating beloved creatures!

**Saturday, October 3, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.,
Courtyard and Fireside Room**

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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