



A Monthly Newsletter of the United Methodist Church of Vista

We are called to be an authentic, accessible and inclusive community
in Christ, celebrating and extending God's love into the world.

Pastor's Ponderings

It is the most important day of the Christian life: Easter. Every year brings a little different experience of Easter, depending on where we are in life and what is happening in the world. As you think of meeting Jesus on the morning of the Resurrection, what will you bring with you this year? How will Easter touch your heart in 2024?

This year I'm thinking about how Jesus met everyone where they were, even on the way to the Cross. He listened to Pilate, Judas, Peter, Mary and Martha and all the others, right where they were. To the religious leader, political leader, confused disciple, grieving sister, angry friend, Jesus met them in their concerns and listened. To the hungry, Jesus talked about hunger. To the sick or suffering, Jesus concerned himself with illness and pain. To the excluded or marginalized, Jesus spoke about the left-out and left-behind. Even on the Cross, Jesus listened to the two people who were hanging near him, and to those on the ground.

Jesus demonstrated what some call soft leadership on the way to the Cross. Soft-leadership skills are skills that connect us with other people. Soft-leadership is empathy, compassion, honesty, integrity, deep listening, teamwork, conflict resolution, creativity and adaptability. Jesus' commitment to love even those cast out of society is soft-leadership. Hard-leadership skills are often described as teachable skills you learn for a task or job. The ability to fill out forms, or follow processes and procedures are hard-leadership skills.

So many churches are declining because they focus on tasks and to-do lists. They get caught up in the process of being church and forget that church is a place called to exemplify welcome and belonging. Yes, there are forms and committee work we do to stay connected with each other and our larger community, but the primary work of a church is caring for people. If a church does nothing but deep and active listening with the goal of understanding, we will change the world. The kingdom of God is realized when people see and hear one another.

Easter is the moment when God listens and feels the deepest pain of the human world. Easter is the moment when God meets humanity where we are and turns everything around. Pain and hate will not define what it is to be human. Love and the journey to transformation and redemption is our path. God didn't give Jesus a to-do list for earthly life. God gave Jesus a heart and compassion that is so often under appreciated but is the very thing at the heart of our Gospel message this Easter. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Leigh Ann Shaw

Finance Focus

The Finance/Stewardship Committee submitted the Church 2024 budget to Church Council on Feb. 10. The budget was reviewed, discussed and approved by Church Council. The 2024 budget submitted was \$624,185.60. Total income expected for 2024 is \$453,600.00, which leaves the Church with a deficit of \$170,585.60. The Finance/Stewardship committee takes very seriously the operating budget for the church. We have several fundraising events planned for 2024 and Tom Humphrey will continue his efforts on restaurant fundraising. We will continue to closely monitor the budget and plan to give Church Council an update in June. We appreciate the congregation's continued giving to enable the Church to continue their outreach activities locally and beyond. Every dollar donated is greatly appreciated. Our Pennies For Heaven campaign will continue for 2024 and all funds received go directly to the operating expenses of the Church. Total Pennies For Heaven donations through February 25 are \$210. Blessings and prayers to you all.

-Sara Baldwin, Chairperson,
Finance/Stewardship Committee

Candy donations, Easter egg hunt, March 31

The Discipleship/Education Committee is sponsoring the egg hunt following the 10 a.m. Easter worship service. Join us for this fun event for the family with crafts and snowcones. Remember, have your children bring their Easter baskets!

Donations of candies and plastic eggs can be brought to the church office or dropped in the donation box in the Narthex on Sundays. For more information, contact Margene Haase.

Please join us on Friday, March 29 to help stuff the Easter eggs!

Acolyte Training, March 10

Acolyte training is an opportunity for third to fifth graders to be part of the worship service. They will bring Jesus' light into the service and take it out at closing of service. They would be serving on the first and fourth Sundays. Youth will serve on the second and third Sundays.

If interested, training will be immediately following the worship service on Sunday, March 10. For more information, please contact Margene Haase, 760.402.9802.

Happy "March" Birthdays

David Hendron (3)
Ed Simpson (4)
Geneva Christensen (9)
Hope McGinn (9)
Melissa Giard (10)
Trent Hamlin (10)
Steve Lambert (10)
Diane Biggs (12)
Erin Fraser (12)
Indiana Escobar (13)
Greg Kim (13)
Leo Domenichetti (16)
Rollin Grider (16)
Gracie Stempson (16)
Joseph Smith (18)
Dolores Sasway (19)
Lance Bodnar (23)
Ruben Choque-Jimenez (23)
Madelyn Knight (24)
Margene Haase (25)
Cathy Hilling (27)
Sandy Harvey (29)
Barbara Lange (29)
Jeff Pickell (29)
Kathleen Vought Mejia (30)
Sandy Riser (30)
Roan Pierce (31)
Sophie Pierce (31)

Note: If your birthday is not listed, please call Paula at the church office.

Interpreter for the Deaf

An interpreter for the Deaf/and hard-of-hearing will be here on March 3 (first Sunday of the month). We are striving to ensure that God's Word is accessible to all. Please invite anyone you feel could benefit from this service.

Flame Editor
Barbara Mitchell
Flame Production
Paula Amaro
WEB Master
Jim McGlocklin

Next deadline is Wednesday, March 20, 2024
Comments or suggestions, please let us know.

The Flame (monthly newsletter)
United Methodist Church of Vista
490 S. Melrose Drive
Vista, CA 92081

Zoom Gatherings and Meetings

Zoom meetings are one way we are working on keeping connected. All you need is a computer or smartphone with a built-in microphone and a camera and you can join in. Download the Zoom app to your device, click on “join a meeting” and follow the prompts to join the gathering.

Congregational Care, March 7, 1:30 p.m.

Meeting ID: 921 7026 9939

Passcode: 490490

Finance, March 6, 6:30 p.m.

Meeting ID: 963 4459 7468

Education/Discipleship, March 13, 6 p.m.

Meeting ID: 983 3122 0500

Reconciling Ministries, March 26, 6:30 p.m.

Meeting ID: 995 8164 7395

Passcode: Welcome

In-person...

SPRC, Sunday, March 3 (following worship service),
Conference Room

Trustees, March 17 (following worship service),
Conference room

Game Night, March 16

Game night will be on Saturday, March 16 at 6:00 p.m. in the upper social hall and will continue meeting on the third Saturday of each month, unless there is a special event. Hope to see more friends coming to share in the fun, snacks and conversation. We begin at 6:00 p.m. and end around 8:30 p.m. Bring a new game or a snack if you like. If you want to let me know if you are coming, my email is loretta.pierce@cox.net.

-Loretta Pierce

Calendar Protocol

Communication is all important and key to everything. Please do not assume that traditional dates are okay as we have much going on. (1). CALL Paula; (2) fundraiser for Church? CONTACT Finance (Sara); (3) Off-campus? Should probably let calendar know as, if there is more than one event occurring, it can tax participation in both events; (4) when we have labor intensive activities, please circle back and thank the volunteers; (5) Please have a Set-up and a Cleanup Plan (checklist is being worked up and will soon be ready for distribution/use).

Lent and Easter at UMC of Vista

March 24 Palm Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m.

March 28 Holy Week Worship, with Communion at 7:00 p.m.

Following Jesus' journey to the cross from Maundy Thursday to Good Friday.

March 31 Easter Sunday Worship
7:00 a.m. – Early Riser Worship, on Patio
7:30 a.m. - Pancake Fundraiser
10:00 a.m. – Joyous Celebration in Sanctuary
11:15 a.m. - Easter Egg Hunt

April 7 Worship Online Only – 10 a.m. on our YouTube channel.

Easter Pancake Breakfast fundraiser

And Two Fishes along with Hospitality are planning an Easter Pancake Breakfast fundraiser for our church budget. The breakfast is from 7:30 to 10:00 a.m. Volunteers are needed. Please contact Brenda Walker, 760.505.1702.

More information to follow in the Spark and bulletin announcements. -Mike Walker

Senior Safety

Are you concerned about senior safety, maybe for your parents or yourself?

United Women in Faith are hosting a special program, on March 5, about Senior Safety. George Hernandez, a Crime Prevention Specialist from the San Diego Sheriff's Department, will talk about protection from crime for seniors. The program will begin at 11:00 a.m. in the Community Room. Men and women are welcome to come and hear about this important area of crime prevention. Bring your own lunch.

Heartfelt Thanks...

I would like to thank the United Women in Faith for their Special Recognition Award on January 28th. Working with the Reconciling Ministries, and Two Fishes, Helping Hands, and other areas of service, gives me the opportunity to share my joy, friendship and faith with others. I am honored to share this award with Karen Felien and all of the previous recipients.

In appreciation and gratitude,

Loretta Pierce

Celebrations for Ministries and Updates

- Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations; Peace Vigil
- Concert in January: Pastor Frank was gratified by nice feedback from the community; church folk from other churches shared they enjoyed our concerts as their churches did not do this; two new members to bells and one to choir.
- Suzanne McMurchie: shared the success of the Advent Study led by Lyn Berry and herself; looking forward to the soon-to-start Lenten Study
- Kathy Johnson: This is Black History month and our one-year anniversary of becoming a Reconciling congregation.
- Mike Walker: “and Two Fishes” has been upstairs for almost a year now, and have served 1,591 dinners and lunches; since July 15, there have been 315 showers with 15-20 per week; there have also been quite a few visitors and help from other organizations as well as new volunteers from our own congregation.
- Beth Brainerd Hallock: City of Vista has purchased a building and are setting up a facility to help those in need.
- Sara Baldwin: The Finance Committee Pizza and Ice Cream Party was fun and had 48 participants, Thanks to all.
- Melissa Giard: shared that the Youth had a collaborative movie event with other churches, about 15 youth attended.
- Dakota Koenig: Thanks to all for the Congregational Care participation: caroling, phone calls, cards and card making, meals for those in short-time need; new folks joining committee in coming weeks.
- Sara Baldwin: UWIF had their Stone Soup Luncheon with 14 folk attending, 4 of them never having attended before.
- Melissa Giard: expressed special thanks for all our staff continues to do; she reported that food to Vista Teens will be delivered this coming week.
- Joann Balardeta: expressed how wonderfully joyful the Luau for LaHaina was and the amount of funds raised, thanks to Lyn Berry for the wonderful idea.
- Tracy Lyons: grateful for volunteers that have been working hospitality.

-Church Council

Mark your calendars

- Senior Safety, March 5, 11 a.m., social hall
- Acolyte Training, March 10, following service
- Easter pancake breakfast fundraiser, March 31, 7:30 to 10:00 a.m.
- Easter Egg Hunt, March 31, following 10 a.m. worship
- All Church Rummage Sale will be May 18.

UWIF Support Climate Change

United Women in Faith participated in the annual “A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial” program during a February meeting. The self-denial encourages the women to give up something special and instead to contribute that cost amount to the support of a designated project each year. This year, the giving will help support the climate change advocacy of the United Women in Faith. At the February meeting the women shared lunch with each one bringing a can of vegetables to combine into stone-soup, no dessert served represented the self-denial portion of the program. The prayer portion of the program is an ongoing practice that is vital part of the support for climate change.

-Jacque Howard

Missionaries salaries support

Each year our United Methodist Church of Vista contributes funds to our Global Missionaries Salaries. We gave a total of \$7,500.00 to five of these special folks that engage in direct ministry for the Methodist Church around the globe in 2023. Our recipients were Katherine Parker, Krista Suzanne Givens, Claudia Genung, Jo Prim, and Joel Hortiales. This money was a grant from our Outreach Ministries fund. We were sent a lovely thank you letter from UMCOR for our generosity in helping to spread the healing power of the gospel to those who suffer.

Community event...San Diego Baroque Concert, March 10, 4 p.m. at King of Kings Lutheran

San Diego Baroque, a collaborative ensemble, comprises some of the most talented early music specialists in the area. Each artist is an accomplished soloist in their own right.

King of Kings Lutheran Church (2993 MacDonald Street in Oceanside) and the American Guild of Organists, Palomar Chapter, are co-sponsoring this free concert.

-Carol Graham

Thank You, Gayla

As many of you may know, Gayla Prociv will be leaving to help friends in Seattle from March 14 to May 13.

We are all grateful for the remarkable service and ministry Gayla has brought us. Her loving care, endless energy, and joyous greetings all make us feel loved and valued. She has supported all areas of Congregational Care, Hospitality, Education, Memorials, and other special events in our church. The list of her dedication to service goes on.

So as we wait for her return, we send Gayla off with our prayers, thanks and love.

Blessings and Love,

Pastor Leigh Ann, Pastor Frank and Dakota Koenig

Flowers for Birthdays, Anniversaries and Special Events

Is there someone or something you would like to recognize and celebrate? Let us know WHAT and WHEN you would like “Flowers” and our Video Team will create a “Flower Slide” just for you. Please click on this link: <http://specialeventslides.umcvista.org/> to fill out a form in order to request the flowers.

Please...

Do not drop off your donation of clothes, etc. when the church office is closed. The church office is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 12 noon.

Stay connected

E-mail: umcvista@umcvista.org

Website: www.umcvista.org

Facebook: United Methodist Church of Vista

Be sure to check us out on Yelp!

Pray together for...

Jim McGlocklin, Bill Rockwell, Rae Ann Wirth, Leo Domenichetti, Norm and Luene Corwin, Paul Lange, Sheryl Lyons, Janice Myers, Stu Gibson, Jeanette Marusak, Dolores Sasway, Evelyn Lawson, Traci Wheeler, Erin Fraser, Ko and Rosalynn Kim, Charlotte Chappell, Beverly Thomason, Stan Hamilton, Jim Rogers (hospice care), Joan Brainerd

South District Prayer Session, Tuesday, March 5, 7 p.m.

South District Lay Leader, Michael Mitchell, hosts an on-going monthly prayer Zoom meeting the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. This is open to everyone including regular church folks, leaders and pastors.

Zoom Meeting ID: 842 2413 4406

Passcode: 786330

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