



HOPE, JOY AND LOVE RISING

Cast~A~Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

APRIL 2021

CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY!

Happy Easter! I am writing this on Palm Sunday, the Sunday BEFORE Easter. I just finished recording video clips for the Sunday AFTER EASTER and recording a message for Easter Sunday. Does anybody really know what time it is? In the liturgical calendar, I mean. The worship team has been working in the TWILIGHT ZONE that COVID created all year long, recording one or two weeks in advance. It can be so confusing! So, we are really excited to meet you in real time in a real place we all love and to meet face-to-face.

We are pleased to invite you, our congregation, to an EASTER SUNDAY SING-ALONG, April 4, from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m. When it's face-to-face and in-person, that's GOOD NEWS! Outside we can sing! Safety protocols including physical distancing and wearing masks are still in place. It helps us if you bring your own chairs. We will have chairs available for those that need them. We'll be in the parking lot by the Children's Center. We look forward to greeting you all this EASTER SUNDAY. Our wonderful UMW will be there with an Easter Surprise for all of you who attend. So, celebrate with us. On the other side of "Dark Saturday" Christ arose. Christ is with us!

Thanks be to God!

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis



275 North Halcyon Road . Arroyo Grande . CA 93420 . (805) 481-2692

Ecumenical Good Friday Service

You are invited to join with members of our neighboring congregations in the South County at an in-person outdoor Good Friday worship service to be held at St. Patrick's Catholic Church at **3 pm on Friday, April 2nd.**

Reservations are required. I have included a link for registering. I tried it. You must copy the link and place it in the search area. It will not work to just click on it. When you succeed, the link takes you to St. Patrick's and a list of services. Choose the Good Friday Service and click it and you will be given a form to fill out. There will be the standard outdoor worship safety and hygiene protocols including check-in list, masks, physical distancing, and no communal singing.

It promises to be a nice, simple and short service to carry on our local tradition of sharing together in this way. Here is the link. ~Julie Burns



<https://rsvp.church/r/rqPFbmSU>

Gracious Lord,

**Your children are here at the entrance of the temple;
We have come to bring you praise.**

**Your children are here at the entrance of the church;
We have come to bring you our anxiety as we face the future.**

**Your children are here at the entrance of the chancel;
We have come to bring you our lament.**

**We, your children, are here at the foot of your cross;
We have come to bring you our sins.**

Have mercy on us, Have mercy on us, Have mercy on us, O Lord!

We trust in your forgiveness and compassion! Make us compassionate towards all who want to enter into the Body of Jesus Christ in the months to come.

**In the Name of the resurrected Jesus Christ,
Amen.**

~~ Reverend Powell

North District Weekly Covenant Prayer List March 7 -- 28, 2021

from District Superintendent, Rev. James Powell

*“Pray for the continued mission of the UMC in the California-Pacific Conference:
To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”*

Prayer Date	Church/Ministry	Pastor(s)
April 4, 2021	La Cañada UMC	Pastor Karin Ellis
April 4, 2021	Pacoima First UMC	Pastor Lydia Waters
April 11, 2021	Woodland Hills UMC	Seung-il Whang & Pastor Christian Jung
April 11, 2021	Glendale First UMC	Pastor Kris Tate
April 18, 2021	Morro Bay: Estero Bay UMC	Pastor Stephen Meadors
April 18, 2021	Burbank: Magnolia Park UMC	Pastor Chris Fracchiolla
April 25, 2021	Newhall: Friendly Valley Community UMC	Pastor John Wang
April 25, 2021	Lancaster UMC	Pastor Greg Pittman

TUESDAY PRAYER TIME IN THE SANCTUARY

Starting Easter Sunday, April 4, the Season of Easter extends through Trinity Sunday, May 30th. We celebrate Easter Joy for two months!

You are invited come into the sanctuary on Tuesdays between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon to offer prayers for friends, family and our world.

A simple sign in, a signed waiver on hand, a quick temperature check is all it takes to enter. Judy Atwood or Mary Hawkins will be there to meet you and usher you in. Brad Bettencourt will often be playing softly at the organ to set the tone for reflection and contemplation.

Sometimes there are only one or two people present and other times more. Nevertheless, the sanctuary is a place of prayer for you. We welcome you.

**SANCTUARY OPEN FOR PRAYER
TUESDAYS**
Between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon

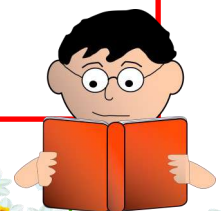


PROGRAM MINISTRY

Program Ministry is hoping to invite you all back to exciting planned events in the near future. Stay tuned to the Program Ministry section of the newsletter for details.

Bailey and I continue to join BG and Foxey on motorhome excursions and Bob is busy taking care of the yard and reading!

submitted by Sandy Underwood



DRIVING THROUGH...AND BRINGING IN THE FOOD!



FOOD AND CASH DONATIONS WERE BROUGHT TO THE DRIVE-THROUGH ON MARCH 14 FOR THE FIVE CITIES CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S PANTRY



Photos by Rob Isakson





United
Methodist
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

“The organized unit of the United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.”

Spring is here and with it comes the promise of a new beginning. Out walking we can not help but see the signs of this new beginning....the poppies, the blossoms on the fruit trees, butterflies and the birds building their nests.

With this spring we happily look forward to this new beginning with the slow opening of our church. We gathered outside for a sing a long and now on Easter we will again have a gathering outside to enjoy music in celebration of Easter.

The Easter symbol of the egg, be it colored robin blue or speckled, reminds us of the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. In keeping with the tradition of giving out Easter eggs we will have an Easter treat for each of you when you come on Easter.

Looking toward the world, we hear the news of racial injustices, but do not conform to the pattern of the world. Be mindful of the



butterfly, how it transforms itself and how we can make such a transformation in the world, just as nature renews itself we too can transform ourselves, and thus the world. Love!

Do not conform to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.

– Romans 12:2 (NIV)

See you on Easter!

submitted by Gerry McGuire





From the editor: The March 28 message to her students from Carolyn Russell, our Sunday School Teacher, tells the story of Holy Week and how we are thankful for God's promise and how we are thankful for each other. This is a message for all of us.

back to life! Jesus gives us the promise of eternal life!

It is sad when someone dies. But Jesus has given us a promise. Even though we may die here on Earth, we are given a beautiful life in heaven. We celebrate Easter because it is a reminder that Jesus has given us that wonderful promise. He wants us to live good lives and help one another while we are on the earth. Then, he has given us a beautiful place to be when we are finished with this earth. Hosanna! We are happy about that!

Today marks the beginning of Holy Week. Holy Week is the time when we remember Jesus coming into Jerusalem for Passover, being arrested, being killed on a cross, buried, and then rising from the dead. While it is sad to hear that Jesus died, it is a time for Christians to always remember that he died for a reason.

With our lesson today, we think about the time when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. The people shouted, "Hosanna!" and waved palm branches. Can you find a palm branch or make one out of paper today? You can go out on your front porch and wave it and shout, "Hosanna!" You can be thankful for the promise Jesus made!

Today's story tells us about Jesus coming to Jerusalem and how people praised him by waving Palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna!" Jesus rode into the city on a humble donkey, but was praised like a king. Jesus was the Messiah. He was the king everyone had been waiting for! But some people did not understand. This is the sad part.

We are thankful to go back to school. We are thankful for each other. We wear our masks, wash our hands and keep our distance because we love one another. Just as Jesus loves us, we show our love to one another. We are thankful. I hope you have a wonderful week and that you are filled with the joy of Jesus' love!

Jesus was arrested. Then, leaders decided to kill Jesus. Jesus did not do anything wrong. Next Sunday, we will celebrate Easter. Easter is the time when we celebrate something happy. Jesus came

Hosanna!

Ms. Russell





ELT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DEADLINE COMING SOON

We have scholarships to award to graduating high school seniors and current college students!

Students may apply for this scholarship more than once provided they have maintained a minimum 2.5 GPA in their college work. Repeating college students do not need letters of recommendation but must attach a current college transcript to their application. High school seniors need to include the recommendation letters and high school transcript with their application.

Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship applications and instructions are now available on-line (www.worshipweekly.com) and in the church office. The purpose of this scholarship is to help deserving United Methodist students enrolled in accredited universities, community colleges, and technical schools defray the cost of their education.

Only students who have been active participants in the Arroyo Grande First United Methodist Church may apply. The completed application with required attachments must be turned in to the church office or emailed to the church office at fumcag@sbcglobal.net by May 15th. Scholarship-schecks will be sent to recipients upon proof of registration in Fall, 2021 college classes.

So don't delay—turn your application in by the 15th of May!

submitted by Judy Leonard



FROM YOUR LAY LEADER

Patti Melsheimer



Photos of poppies and lupine by Patti

Have you noticed? Do you feel it? Do you smell it? Do you see it? My neighbor's California poppies are in full bloom! My other neighbor's blue lupines are starting to open. The birds are beginning to investigate possible sites for their nests. My daffodils are waving their yellow cups in the breeze!*

Yes, Spring is in the air!

And with Spring comes a feeling of renewal, fresh beginnings and positive hope! But this year I think these feelings are not just related to the natural world around us. It is also a feeling of hope and new beginnings because we are anticipating the end or at least a slow down in the spread of the pandemic! Many have received their vaccinations and others are feeling positive about receiving a vaccination soon. Some are thinking that they can begin to go out and be with family and friends again.



What a wonderful feeling it is! And it could not be a more appropriate time to be having these feelings of new beginnings! Easter is quickly coming! And with it we are reminded of the beginning of something new, of a fresh start, of a time to triumph over our fears and insecurities. Now with Easter we can focus on the possibilities of life, rather than what we have perceived as limitations.

On Easter Sunday, we celebrate that through Christ, the rock has been rolled away, the obstacles have been removed, life as we know and understand it has been turned on its head, everything has changed, and nothing — not even death — stands in our way.

Christ the Lord is Risen! Halleluah!



** Did you know that the daffodil is one of the blooms most often connected to the Resurrection? Tradition says that giving a gift of daffodils will ensure happiness for the receiver.*

News from the Mission Team

by Judy Atwood, chair

MISSION TEAM: April 2021
Judy Atwood

MISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE...IN ACTION

As you receive this new issue of the newsletter we will be closing in on the end of this year's Lenten journey. It, along with the whole year, has been a different time than we have experienced in the past. I wanted to give any who want to complete this Lenten journey additional time to support the Sewing Ministry being started in Haiti as I challenged in the last issue. So far at this point, I am aware that we will be helping in the beginning of this ministry with funds to support three students.

If you missed the details last month, I am including some of it as a reminder.

A dream of Enickson, who is the pastor of that small church, is hoping to begin a Sewing Ministry for students who have no funds to be able to further their education at a college or university. The idea is to provide a Sewing Ministry to teach students a skill that can be a marketing tool for them to support themselves as they go forward in life. He is hoping for a way for them to find success for themselves and the community.

They have as a goal of beginning with up to 15 students as the funds are raised to start the program. To raise the funds for a student, according to their estimate it will take \$238 per student.

A class of 15 students would be a total of \$3,570.

This is certainly cheaper than it would be to help 15 students to gain a skill here in Arroyo Grande.

Costs: Sewing Machine \$150.00

Table \$50.00

Scissors, \$5.00

Metric Ruler \$12.00

Material \$15

Thread \$6.00.



If you are interested in this possibility, let me know and we can help make that happen. Checks can be sent to the church marked Sewing Ministry marked Sewing Ministry.

YOU WERE SUPER RESPONDERS to the challenge of making a difference for someone in our community. Your response to the food you provided for the food drive as you came for your baked potato drive through was wonderful. See the photos of folks driving through on page 4. Below is part of the food collected that day.



Photo by Rob Isakson

We also sent financial donations to the Five Cities Christian Women's Pantry in the amount of \$372.00. This congregation is a blessing to the community.

So, my challenge to myself, and others who wish to join me, continues to be what challenge are you and I willing to take to help make a change for someone else?



A THOUGHT FOR MEDITATION.
DON'T ASK GOD TO GUIDE YOUR FOOTSTEPS,
IF YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO MOVE YOUR FEET.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>April is National Kite Making Month!</p>				<p>1</p> <p>Jack Cuddy Birthday</p> <p>Janine Moore Birthday</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Ecumenical Good Friday/ ST. PATRICK'S Catholic Church 3:00 PM</p>	<p>3</p> <p>HOLY SATURDAY</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Sing-Along 11:00-11:30 am Church Parking Lot</p> <p>Paul Holden Birthday</p>		<p>6</p> <p>Patti Melsheimer Birthday</p> <p>Laurie Moore Birthday</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Pamela Bauske Birthday</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Grant Cuddy Birthday</p> <p>Shirley Werling Birthday</p>		
<p>11</p> <p>Second Sunday of Easter</p> <p>Donald Gugeler Birthday</p>				<p>15</p> <p>Jack Moore Birthday</p>		
<p>18</p> <p>Third Sunday of Easter</p>						<p>24</p> <p>Ryan Odom Birthday</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Fourth Sunday of Easter</p>						

Meet Our
CHURCH STAFF

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PLEASE NOTE:

Layout Editor reserves the right to cut and edit articles to meet space limitations.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER FLOWERS FOR VIDEO WORSHIP?



You are invited to order flowers to honor or remember someone special. Your floral tribute will be placed on the altar as we record our mini-worship service on Sunday and, if you can't swing by to pick them up, we will get those beautiful flowers to you.

We can order as usual from the GRAND BOUQUET like we always do when we gather in person, or Brad Bettencourt long-time florist himself who actually owned a flower shop for years) will arrange some pretty Trader Joe's flowers to be used in the video.

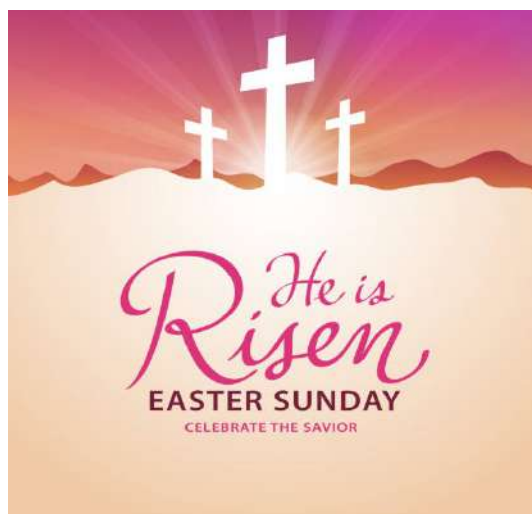
Please contact Frances in the Church Office who is the liaison with the Worship Team to make these plans.



Jack Cuddy	04/01
Janine Moore	04/01
Paul Holden	04/04
Patti Melsheimer	04/06
Laurie Moore	04/06
Pam Bauske	04/07
Grant Cuddy	04/08
Shirley Werling	04/08
Don Gugeler	04/11
Jack Moore	04/15
Ryan Odom	04/24



Have we missed **your** birthday? If so, it is not listed in our data base. Please contact the church office and we will be glad to add your birth date to our monthly birthday list!



Hope, Joy & Love Rising



First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

275 North Halcyon Road
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420



2021

Visit us on the web at worshipweekly.com

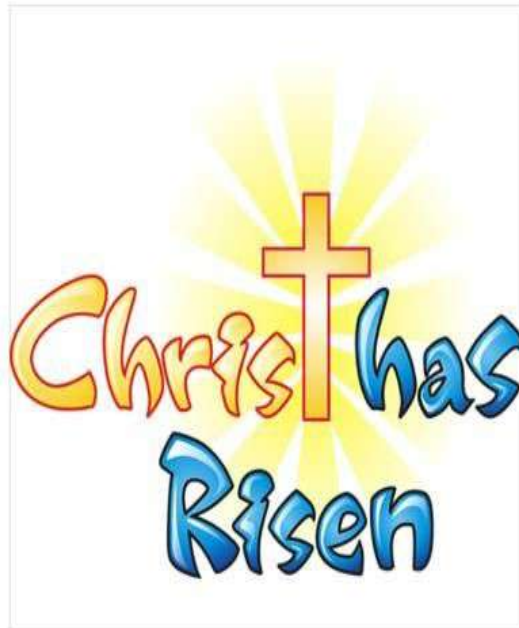
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**EASTER SUNDAY
APRIL 4, 2021**