



HOPE, JOY AND LOVE RISING

Cast~A~Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande MARCH 2024



EASTER SUNDAY
MARCH 31, 2024

MARCH EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



Saturday March 9, SLO Railroad Museum Visit

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Sunday March 24 Palm Sunday

Thursday March 28 Holy Thursday

Friday March 29 Good Friday

Sunday March 31 Easter Sunday

REGULARLY SCHEDULED MONTHLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday Church Services

8:30 AM Contemporary Service

10:30 AM Traditional Service

United Methodist Men

UWF / UMW and Circle Groups

Sew n Sews, JOY Circle, Book Club,

Mary-Martha-Esther

Wednesday Church Work Day

Music Groups

Chancel Choir

Handbell Choir

Gerry's Quilt Class

Exercise Classes

Senior Exercise Tue, Wed, Thu 9 AM

Chair Yoga Tue 11:00 AM

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

From the Pastor:

The Lenten sermon series is JOURNEY TO SUNRISE with the March service schedule. For the Good Friday service, included is information on the Service of Tenebrae.

Rev. Mary Biegelakis

March 3, 2024
Third Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: Honoring God
Exodus 20:1-17, John 2: 13-22

March 10, 2024
Fourth Sunday in Lent
UMCOR SUNDAY
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: Life Ahead
Number 21:4-9, John 3:14-21

March 17, 2024
Fifth Sunday in Lent
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: Heart Knowledge
Jeremiah 31:31-34, John 12:20-33

March 24, 2024
Palm Sunday
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: Final Stretch
Philippians 2:4-5-11, Mark 11:1-11

March 28, 2024
Holy Thursday
6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
1 Corinthians 11:23-26, John 13:1-17, 31b-35
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: Breaking Bread

March 29, 2024
Good Friday
6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary
RITUAL OF TENEBRAE
A Service of Shadows
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: Through the Cross

March 31, 2024
Easter Sunday
JOURNEY TO SUNRISE: He is Risen!
Acts 10:34-43, Mark 16:1-8

What is Tenebrae?

The Service of Tenebrae, or "Shadows," is based on a twelfth-century late night/early morning service and is an extended meditation on the Passion of Christ. Scripture narrating the events of Jesus' last week on earth is read from the gospels interspersed with the extinguishing of candles until the only candle that remains on the altar is the Christ Candle. A bell tolls 33 times to honor the thirty-three years of Jesus' life on Earth. The Christ Candle is then carried out of the sanctuary and worshippers depart in silence. It is a way of remembering Jesus and honoring Jesus' Passion.

This service may be used as (1) a concluding service following Holy Communion on Holy Thursday, or (2) the evening service on Good Friday, particularly as the beginning of a prayer vigil lasting through Saturday.

Our service will be a simple service with the passion narrative from one of the gospels, two or three passion hymns and no homily. The scripture is the message as we honor Jesus' life in worship.



**WORSHIP
LITURGISTS**



MARCH 3

8:30 a.m.-----Joseph Brown
10:30 a.m.-----Nancy St. Laurent

MARCH 10

8:30 a.m.-----Elwood Hyden
10:30 a.m.-----Robin Isakson

MARCH 17

8:30 a.m.-----Susan Thronson
10:30 a.m.-----Cristy Van Hook

MARCH 24

8:30 a.m.-----David Beard
10:30 a.m.-----Judy Leonard

MARCH 31

8:30 a.m.----Mary Thronson
10:30 a.m.----Patti Melsheimer

~ submitted by Jan Treat

USHERS



There is an urgent need for ushers to participate in our 2nd service! Several of our steadfast ushers of many years have asked to retire from this service. We are so grateful for their time, welcoming hands and friendship. In honoring their request, we must rebuild our faithful Team of Ushers this year. I ask as you go about your weekly schedule that you include in your prayers consideration of joining the Team of Ushers. Both men and women, also couples, are encouraged to give it a try. This is a great opportunity to greet and assist ALL who enter

our doors. We are a “Welcoming Church” with many opportunities for worship, fellowship and service. Our ushers are the first ones that people meet as they enter our church. Please see Kerren Brown, who is usually in the Narthex each Sunday morning, to explore joining our Team of Ushers.

~submitted by Kerren Brown



NORTH DISTRICT WEEKLY COVENANT PRAYER LIST FOR MARCH 3, 2024 -MARCH 24, 2024

Prayer week begins on:	Church/Ministry	Clergy Leader(s)
03/03/24	Knollwood UMC	Pastor Kalesita Tu'ifua
03/03/24	First UMC of San Fernando	Pastor Teaira Parker
03/10/24	Glendale First UMC	Pastor Angela Galanis-Price
03/10/24	Glendale First UMC	Pastor Stephanie Rice
03/17/24	First UMC of North Hollywood	Pastor Chamie DelkeskampGarcia
03/17/24	First UMC of Paso Robles	Pastor Joshua Zulueta
03/24/24	Estero Bay UMC	Pastor Steven Poteete-Marshall
03/24/24	First German UMC	Pastor Kurt Poland

*Pray for the continued vision of the UMC in the California-Pacific Conference--
"Ending spiritual and physical hunger." --District Superintendent Reverend Melissa MacKinnon*

The Gallop and Bridges Family

In 1966 we relocated from Lompoc to Arroyo Grande. At this time Arroyo Grande was small! No WalMart or ANY buildings where they are now. It was just green rolling hills.

As we settled in Arroyo Grande one of our first tasks was to find a church. First United Methodist fit our requirements perfectly! We wanted a church that was friendly and accepting, from clergy to congregation. We certainly weren't disappointed. The many groups and clubs for all ages were exactly what we wanted and found. The friendly cordial environment only added to our pleasure!

In 1966 the congregation met in Criswell Hall as the narthex and present sanctuary were only in the planning stage. The congregation sat in folding metal chairs! The minister, Ken Criswell, preached from the stage area. The choir was seated on the stage against both walls.

First United Methodist offered activities for all ages and included everyone! All were welcome. From the women's circle groups to the men's annual and DELICIOUS BBQs, multi-generational families and friends gathered.

What is it about First United Methodist of Arroyo Grande that has kept us coming back since 1966? THE PEOPLE! We have made life-long friends and acquaintances that we love and cherish!

Thank you from Peg Gallop and Peggy Bridges



MARCH UWF Book Club to Discuss House Rules

The UWF Book Club will discuss the novel, House Rules by Jodi Picoult during the March 15th and April 19th meetings at 10:30 A.M. in the church library. Since the book is a long one, the group will discuss the first half on March 15th and the rest of the novel on April 19th.

House Rules follows the life of Jacob, a teenager who has difficulty interpreting normal social behavior and expressing his feelings. He is on the autism spectrum with a condition called Asperger's Syndrome. Jacob has a special interest in forensics science which he has

furthered through watching detective shows. Due to misunderstandings, Jacob is suspected of involvement in the death of his tutor. This fascinating story helps us understand the challenges those with Asperger's Syndrome face.

If you would like to read House Rules and discuss it with book club members during March and April, see Judy Leonard for a library copy of it. See Judy or Patti Melsheimer with questions.

~submitted by Judy Leonard



CALLING ALL UNITED METHODIST MEN!

The United Methodist Men will be holding a breakfast fellowship meeting on Saturday, March 2 at 9:00 AM.

The meeting place will be the Hilton Garden Inn, 601 James Way, Pismo Beach. A breakfast buffet will be served at a cost of \$20.



The program speaker will be Scott Collins, Executive Director of HASLO/Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo. Contact Paul at holdenp@yahoo.com if you want to attend but haven't signed up yet.

~ Paul Holden, President



United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

MARCH 2024

Sunday, February 25th we had a wonderful United Women in Faith Sunday. We presented two pins of recognition: Recipients are church secretary Frances Robertson and church pianist Dennis Eiler. Both are very deserving and important to our organization's program. Congratulations, Frances and Dennis! A delicious potluck luncheon followed the second service.

Next was a skit (actually a very informative presentation), telling the story of the early beginnings of United Women in Faith. This was given by the UWF Steering Committee in costume with period black outfits and fine hats!



Circles and Groups: All women are invited to attend.

Mary, Martha Esther Circle meets the last Wednesday of each month at 10 am in the McMillen Room. Come join us, we'd love to have you! Contact Mary Thronson.

Joy Circle meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month in members' homes at 3:30 pm. This first meeting in homes will be at Pricilla Alquist's house. Contact Kerren Brown.

Book Club meets the 3rd Friday in the Library at 10:30 am. Contact Judy Leonard for a book.

Sew And Sews meet every Tuesday in the McMillen Room 10 until 2. Bring a sandwich if you want to stay for lunch. We encourage all interested in quilting, crocheting, knitting and just plain visiting and sharing to attend.

~submitted by Gerry McGuire, President

Left: UWF ladies during the presentation

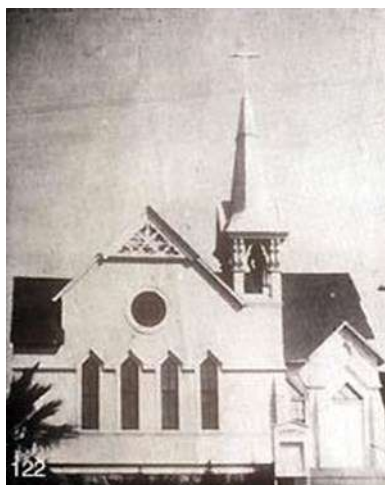
Bottom Left : Frances receiving UWF pin

Below: Dennis receiving UWF pin--IN STYLE!



Some notes on the history of the First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

by Joel Anderson



This year we celebrate the 140th anniversary of the founding of the First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande. Our church was officially founded in September 1884 with 24 charter members. Construction of the church was started in 1886 and completed on September 9, 1887. The church and parsonage were built at a cost of about \$3200. A small sum now, a big sum then. The original church building now houses the Harvest Church on Branch Street in the Village. By 1888 membership reached 160 and a new congregation was started in Nipomo. The Nipomo church is now Calvary Chapel. In 1902 an expansion church was built in Oceano. That building is now the Open Door Church. A church was later built in Shell Beach. The Shell Beach church closed in 2006 and is now Pearl Chapel by the Sea. Stained glass windows from the Shell Beach Church are now in the transepts of our church.

About 1890 Camp Arroyo Grande was established just above the Village on land donated to the church by a Methodist real estate developer. The 12-sided Tabernacle was built in 1897 and is still the center of camp activities. About 1912 additional acreage was donated by a logging company. In the early years the camp hosted numerous events including prohibition and women's suffrage rallies. Revival meetings could draw up to 2000 people from all over California! Before World War II



families would often spend many weeks in summer enjoying the camp. In more recent times the camp hosted art shows, educational symposiums, Camp Fire and other youth summer camps as well as corporate and church retreats. The camp eventually became property of the Annual Conference. In 2017 the California-Pacific Annual conference sold the camp to the Five Cities Community Service Foundation, much to the relief of the community who did not want it sold to a real estate developer.



It continues to serve the area as a place for retreats and summer camps.

In 1960 our Church moved from the Village to its present location. Initially the new campus consisted of only what is now Criswell Hall and

wing of the education building that is now the Children's Center. The two-story education building was added in 1962. In 1966 the Trustees authorized the construction of our present sanctuary, which was dedicated June 5, 1968. In 2000 the bell tower was added. It houses the bell from the original church in the village (more about the bell in a future article). In 2005 the Children's Center opened, creating a new and needed ministry of our church to the community.

For further information and lots of wonderful pictures, please see our WorshipWeekly.com website and click the **HISTORY** tab.



Students Encouraged to Apply for 2024-25 ELT Scholarships

Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship applications will be available on-line (www.worshipweekly.com) and in the church office beginning in March. The purpose of this scholarship is to help support deserving United Methodist students who will be enrolled in accredited universities, colleges, or technical schools during the 2024-2025 school year.

Only students who are or have been active participants in the Arroyo Grande First United Methodist Church may apply. Graduating high school seniors must include letters of recommendation as well as a high school transcript with their completed applications. Returning college students will need to provide a college transcript but are not required to submit letters of recommendation. Students may apply for this scholarship more than once as long as they have maintained a minimum 2.5 GPA in their college work and will be enrolled as full-time students.

The completed application with required attachments must be turned in to the church office by May 15th. Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship recipients will be announced in early June. Scholarship checks will be given to recipients upon proof of registration in Fall, 2024 college classes.

So, if you would like to be considered for an ELT Scholarship, please submit a completed application by May 15th. Contact Judy Leonard with any scholarship questions.

~submitted by Judy Leonard

HOSPITALITY SNACKS

<u>MAR 3</u>	<u>Trustees</u>
<u>MAR 10</u>	<u>Staff-Parish</u>
<u>MAR 17</u>	<u>Finance</u>
<u>MAR 24</u>	<u>Nominating</u>
<u>MAR 31</u>	<u>Worship Team</u>
<u>APR 7</u>	<u>Fellowship</u>
<u>APR 14</u>	<u>Christian Educ/ Membership</u>
<u>APR 21</u>	<u>Children's Ctr</u>
<u>APR 28</u>	<u>Communications</u>

A Thank You for the Angel Tree Gifts



I received a thank you card from the Department of Social Services from Marge Castle, Operation Santa Manager, regarding our generous contributions to the Angel Tree gifts that Social Services calls Operation Santa.

Ms. Castle wrote "thanks to members of our community like you, we collected and distributed more than 11,422 toys, items of clothing and sundries, as well as dozens of gift cards, to children and also to some seniors who might have received nothing for Christmas. 2,477 children and seniors received gifts during the holidays this year."

So thank you all who participated in providing gifts to the children whose names were on our Angel Tree. We truly have a loving and very caring congregation. A true blessing from the Lord.

If you need it for your records, the DSS tax IDF# for your contribution is 95-6000939. Thank you all again.

Love and blessings,
Jan Treat

~submitted by Jan Treat

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

We had a wonderful time at the Mardi Gras as you will see in the photos below if you missed it.

February's movie Indiana Jones was exciting! With five people present, we have plenty of room for more. If you would like to suggest movies for us to see, please let us know. Leave a note at the Connection table or

see me. Our movie for this month will be a surprise. Stay tuned!

Coming up March 9, will be a visit to the San Luis Railroad Museum. There is a \$5 entrance fee. Meet at the church at 9:30 AM to carpool. Sign-up at the Connections table.

~ submitted by Gerry McGuire





News from the Mission Team

UMCOR: Embodying Compassion: Being God's Light.

UMCOR, established by our church in 1940, is the United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR Sunday celebration is March 10 this year. This special offering is collected on the fourth Sunday in Lent and provides major support for immediate assistance in the wake of natural and human-caused disasters and helps support ongoing ministries of food, shelter, health and peace. UMCOR provides hope for communities and individuals whose lives have been upset by war, storms or other crises. This ministry is achieved exclusively through your generosity. Last year, your generosity delivered \$1.5 million for direct ministry to persons in need.

In February 2023, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southern Turkey. UMCOR, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, worked with a trusted partner in Turkey to respond. Because many displaced people still live in tents where open flames of candles or kerosene lanterns are dangerous, solar lanterns were distributed, thanks in part to gifts from United Methodists.

We are embodying compassion and being God's light through UMCOR.

In John 3:21, Jesus says to Nicodemus, "Those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God." This conversation opens up the expansiveness of God, who so loves the whole world and who sent Jesus to lead us on a path to saving grace. Nicodemus later stands up for Jesus when the Pharisees want Jesus arrested and in John 19, he brings a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloe with which to wrap Jesus' body. He embodies compassion. He is God's light.

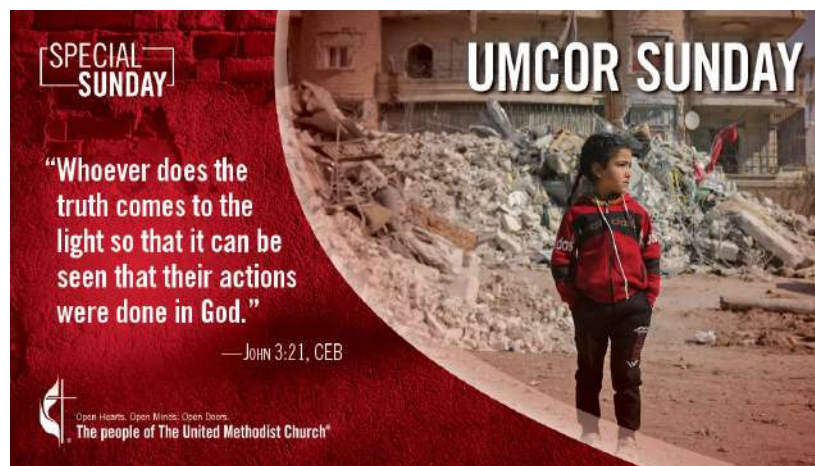
UMCOR is like a beacon of God's light in some of the bleakest moments of people's lives. When disaster strikes, when families lose their homes, when lives are turned upside down, UMCOR is there, just as Jesus calls us to be.

In Ukraine, for example, fighting forced Tatiana and her seven-year-old daughter to flee their home. Eventually, Tatiana was connected with an UMCOR-IOCC supported Eleos-Ukraine shelter in the Chernivtsi region in the eastern Carpathians. "Everything was different from the hotel," says Tatiana. "Good infrastructure, a clean room and staff who always listen to you and try to solve your problems." After receiving medical checkups and legal consultation, the pair qualified for state social assistance. Tatiana found a job and her daughter was placed in a nearby school. "Lots of people we don't know care about us and want to help," says Tatiana.

We embody compassion and God's light through UMCOR. "Those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

UMCOR is a living example of the light of God's love in action. When we support UMCOR, we become part of something much larger than ourselves, and we shine that light even brighter. Through UMCOR, we bring people from the despair of Good Friday into the brilliant reality of Easter.

*~submitted by Priscilla Alquist,
Missions Chairperson*



MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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Abbreviation Legend CH-Criswell Hall S-Sanctuary K-Kitchen L-Library Room #123 MMR-McMillen Room #113 PS-Pastor's Study PL-Parking Lot H R-Handbell Room #115					1	2 Memorial for Pauline Castillo 11:00 AM-S
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3 3rd Sunday in Lent 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir	4 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	5 9:00 AM Senior Exercise--CH 10AM Sew & Sews--MMR 11:00 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal -HR	6 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 10:00 AM Fellowship-L	7 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal--S	8	9 Executive Cleaners in Criswell Hall, Kitchen and 2 bathrooms all day
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10 4th Sunday in Lent 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band 10:30 AM Traditional Service	11 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	12 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Sew Sews- MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR	13 9:00 AM Sr Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 10:00 AM UWF Steering Committee-L 1:30 Mission Team-MMR	14 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:30 AM Staff Parish--PS 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S	15 10:30 AM UWF Book Club-L	16
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17 5th Sunday in Lent 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band and Handbells 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir and Handbells	18 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	19 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:00 AM Sew and Sews-MMR 11:00 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH 1:30 PM Finance-PS 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM JOY Circle-MMR	20 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 2:00 PM Church Council-MMR	21 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 4:00 PM Children's Ctr Board--MMR 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S	22	23
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24 PALM SUNDAY 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir	25 4:30 PM Communications-L 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	26 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:00 AM Sew and Sews--MMR 11:00 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1:00 PM Bible Study-CH	27 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 10:00 AM Mary-Martha-Esther Circle-MMR	28 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:00 PM Holy Thursday Service-S 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S	29 6:00 PM Good Friday Service -S 	30
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31 EASTER DAY 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Team 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir 						
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Meet Our CHURCH STAFF

Church Office: (805) 481-2692
 E-mail: fumcag@yahoo.com
 Website: www.worshipweekly.com
 Find us on Facebook at: United
 Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande
www.facebook.com/fumcag

Pastor: Rev. Mary B. Birgelaitis
E-mail: mbirgelaitis@gmail.com
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 Frances Robertson
Website Manager: Jamie Foster
Children's Education Director:
 Carolyn Russell
Music Director: Julia Burns
Praise Team Director: Mike Clark
Choral Pianist: Dennis Eiler
Handbell Choir Director:
 Leonard Lutz
Bishop: Rev. Dottie Escobedo-Frank
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LENTEN STUDY GROUP

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Facilitated by Nancy St. Laurent

Tuesdays 1:00 p.m. Criswell Hall

*This is an enthusiastic group that
 welcomes all to join!*

*Our Lenten Study book is
 REMEMBER by Susan Robb.*



WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORDER FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP?

Do you enjoy the beautiful flower arrangements placed on the altar on Sundays? Dates are available for Sunday morning flower dedications in upcoming months. Your floral tributes are welcomed and will be placed on the altar for both services on Sunday. You can pick up your arrangement after the second service. Just let us know.

The cost for altar flowers is \$30.

Orders can be made from the Grand Bouquet on your request. Orders can also be placed to have Brad Bettencourt create an arrangement using Trader Joe flowers. Please contact Frances in the Church Office. She is the liaison with both Grand Bouquet and Brad.



Carina Avila	03/02
Lucy Jacob	03/07
Christy Clarke	03/10
Carolyn Anderson	03/11
Marilyn Balster	03/12
Art Gary	03/15
Toni Harvey	03/20
Pam Garza	03/25



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 birthday to our monthly birthday list!



On March 9, Saturday evening, set clocks forward one hour for the Sunday 2 AM time change.

Hope, Joy & Love Rising



First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

275 North Halcyon Road
Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Visit us on the web at worshipweekly.com

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www.facebook.com/fumcag



2024



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Children's Center Chronicle

CHECK OUT OUR UPDATED WEBSITE: WorshipWeekly.com

Our church has a wonderful, extensive website WorshipWeekly.com, thanks to our webmaster Jamie Foster. It has been thoroughly updated. Check it out! Upcoming events and activities are listed on the home page. The list of activities is updated frequently. The **CALENDAR** tab brings up the current monthly calendar. Current and past issues of the Cast-A-Net may be found under the **NEWSLETTER** tab. The **SERVICES** tab and the **WORSHIP VIDEOS** link at the top bring you to the page with links to all the worship videos since we started our video ministry in 2020 and links the 8:30 and 10:30 Sunday bulletins since we resumed meeting in person. Please enjoy the many inspirational and fun videos created during the COVID shutdown.

Want to find out about an event, activity or something special that someone did months or years ago? The **FIND** tab does a search of virtually everything on the website: past issues of the Cast-A-Net, Sunday bulletins, web pages, our church's history.

For a wonderful pictorial history of our congregation that was prepared for the 125th Anniversary celebration click on the **HISTORY** tab. It is a fascinating history of the church's many activities and ministries over the past 140+ years.

If you see anything that need updating, correcting or have suggestions website, please contact Joel Anderson, Chair of Communications Committee.