



Mission Bell

El Segundo United Methodist Church

February 2018

Volume 53 No. 2

Our Mission Statement

We are a warm, caring community of faith, gathering to worship God and sharing the love of Jesus Christ through our friendship and service to our neighbors and the world.



Dear Friends,

The season of Lent is nearly upon us!

Wait, didn't we just get through with Christmas?

Yes. Lent is early this year.

Why? And, what is Lent anyway?

Lent is the season during which Christians prepare themselves for Holy Week and the great celebration of Easter. The beginning of Lent depends upon the date of Easter. Unlike Christmas, the date of Easter fluctuates, depending upon the lunar calendar.

So, how does that work?

Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon, after the vernal equinox, which is March 21, according to the church. That means that Easter can come as early as March 22 and as late as April 25. This year, Easter falls on April 1.

Really? April Fool's Day? That's funny. So, how do we know when Lent starts?

The season of Lent lasts for forty days, not counting Sundays. In other words, it's almost seven weeks long, but not quite.

What's so special about forty days? And why don't we count Sundays?

Lent is modeled on the forty days that Jesus spent fasting and praying and being tested in the wilderness after his baptism. Sundays aren't counted because they are considered to be "Little Easters," weekly celebrations of Jesus' resurrection. Because of this, the first day of Lent always falls on a Wednesday, which is called "Ash Wednesday."

Hey, that means that Lent falls on Valentine's Day this year!

That's correct!

Wow. Why is the first day of Lent called "Ash Wednesday"?

The ancient practice of putting ashes on one's head as a sign of mourning and repentance is found in both Jewish and Christian faiths. On Ash Wednesday, it is traditional for Christians to receive a mark of ashes on their foreheads as a sign of their awareness of their mortality and of their desire to repent of their sins. The mark of ashes is made in the shape of a cross, a powerful symbol of Jesus' death on the cross for us and of God's mercy and forgiveness.

Sounds like getting ashes on the forehead is meant to be a sign of faith and hope.

Exactly.

So, are we having an Ash Wednesday service at our church this year?

No. We are participating in a Community Ash Wednesday service at Faith United Methodist Church in Torrance, starting at 7:30 p.m. You'll find more information elsewhere in this newsletter.

So, what happens during the rest of Lent?

In the early church, Lent was a period of intense spiritual preparation for those who were to be baptized on Easter. Over time, Lent evolved into a time during which all Christians are encouraged to examine their lives and seek to bring them more into line with God's will and way. There are any number of ways to do that: attending worship regularly, creating a daily prayer time, attending Lenten studies, etc.

Are we having Lenten studies at our church?

Glad you asked. Yes, we are having two studies. The Adult Sunday School Class, which meets at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, will be reading Adam Hamilton's book *Final Words From the Cross*. Mark Heaney leads this class, which will begin their study on Sunday, February 4. You'll find information elsewhere in this newsletter.

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And the other study?

I'm leading a five-week study called "Growing in Christ: Practices for Faith." We'll be talking about spiritual practices like prayer, reading scripture, fasting, etc. But we'll do more than talk; participants will also have an opportunity to give different practices a try! There will be two opportunities to participate: Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m., starting on February 21, and Saturdays, at 10:00 a.m., starting on February 17.

Do I need to sign up for the classes?

It would be very helpful! Please let Mark Heaney, the church office, or myself know—or come the first day of the class.

Oh, one more question!

Yes?

Do I have to give something up for Lent?

That's up to you. But here's my thinking. If giving up something brings you closer to Christ, yes. If not, no. The point is not to give up—or take on—something so you'll lose weight, or break a bad habit, or to save money. The point is to enhance your relationship with God in Christ. So, for example, if eating chocolate, or going on Facebook, or impulsive spending adversely affects your relationship with Christ, then Lent could provide you with an opportunity for you to make a change.

(Of course, our relationship with Christ should touch all areas of our lives—and the people with whom we interact.) The idea, however, is not to beat yourself up, but rather to make a change prayerfully, gently, lovingly, and patiently.

Okay, I think I get it.

Good! If you have other questions, let me know! In the meantime, I hope and pray that this year's Lent will be a blessing for us all.

Pastor Lee



FEBRUARY

Sundays

5:30 pm Youth Group in the Youth Room

Dear ESUMC family,

I can't believe that it's February already!

I hope that all those that just finished their semester finals have recovered.

For the month of February, there are regular youth group meetings on all the Sundays in February, except for the 18th due to President's day weekend. Enjoy your three day weekend!

Some other events to look forward to are our monthly Saturday fun night on the 10th which is al-

THANK YOU FOR BEING A BLESSING...

- to our January liturgists: **Mark Heaney, Glafy Carr, Karen Forthuber**, and our UMW Sunday liturgists: **Glafira Tinoco, Pat Heaney, Polly Price, Beth Muraida, Becky Crabtree, Joann Young, and Becky Haynes**.

- to those who warmly welcomed folks to worship as greeters in January: **Gerry and Pat Bushrow, Becky Fisher, JoAnn and Ed Gulian, Louise Maloy, Beth Muraida, and Betty Wilburn**.

- to everyone who graciously served in January as ushers, including **Ralph and Brenda Colbert, Tim Colbert, Colin Elder, Gerry Muraida, and Mike Rutledge**. Special thanks to our ushers on UMW Sunday: **Linda Kruse, Nancy Jacobson, Kim Taylor, and Char Van Drie**.

- to our acolytes in January: **Samuel Forthuber, Porter Robbins, and Vicken Semerdjian**.

- to those who graced our altar with gifts of flowers in January: **Helen Carr, Marilyn Harper, and the United Methodist Women**.

- to **Annie and Allen Semerdjian** for teaching the children's Sunday School in January.

- to those who cooked a meal for Shared Bread in January: **Leslie Evans, Brenda Ross, and Eddie McMasters**.

- to **Marilyn Harper, Mark and Pat Heaney, and Krista and Tonio Martinez**, who "de-decorated" the sanctuary after the Christmas season.

- to **Leslie Evans**, for willingly stepping in to lead the second service on January 7.

- to **Becky Crabtree and the UMW Board**, for putting together a wonderful celebration of the work of United Methodist Women during worship on January 28.

Please add your own expressions of appreciation to those given in this column. We are blessed!

ways on the 2nd Saturday of the month. More details will come regarding what fun event we will do! Keep your calendars open!

Lastly, Lent begins on February 14th, which is also Valentine's Day. I enjoy challenging myself during the Lenten season to give up something as well as take up a spiritual practice in its place. This year I plan on giving up video games and possibly TV shows. This would give me a lot of free time! I hope that you'll consider doing something as well!

**Many blessings,
Eric Iki
Youth Director - ESUMC**



FEBRUARY

ESUMC MUSIC PROGRAM

Our El Segundo church music program is active and "awesome." However, we need support. We need to buy music and other supplies, pay our staff and sometimes hire special musicians. We need your help to continue to support this wonderful ministry.

Led by Patty Breitag, the **Chancel Choir** sings every Sunday except in August, when special music is offered.

They participate in Ash Wednesday Services, often combining with other choirs. They also collaborate with Hope United Methodist Church once a year to sing together at each church on one Sunday. Our wonderful pianist is Kenner Bailey.

The **Bells of Joy**, led by Kathy Rutledge, perform frequently in the church services, and they also perform regularly in the community.

The money collected for Missions in February will be divided equally between the programs.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Mark Heaney will be starting a Lenten study on **February 4** of Adam Hamilton's book "Final Words From the Cross."

"An Inspiring follow-up to '24 hours That Changed the World', 'Final Words from the Cross' is a reflective 7-week devotional study where Adam Hamilton examines Christ's final words. Each chapter begins with a biblical account followed by a first-person story as might have been told from the viewpoint of one of the characters at the cross. Then the chapter explores the meaning for our lives today."

If you want to order the book yourself, you can order the hardcover book on Amazon for about \$15.00. Or Elisabet in the office can get the paperback from Cokesbury for you, which is \$10.31. It has to be ordered quickly, to get here on time, so please tell her as soon as possible.

Mark will be out of town on the 11th, so you would resume on the 18th and continue through Easter Sunday, April 1st. This schedule will give you an additional week to complete the study.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Thanks be to God! We have had our first general meeting of the year, after a delicious brunch prepared by the Rebekah Circle. This meeting included the installation of officers for this year. We had a very good time. Pastor Lee conducted the installation, and her theme was "Letting the Light God Shine Through You."

Please note these important dates to remember:

- The next Board Meeting will be held on January 22, at 6pm in Lucas Chapel.
- UMW is in charge of the morning worship service on January 28. There will be a fellowship meeting directly after church. Please come for as long as you'd like to chat and enjoy each other's company. Coffee and cookies will be provided.

Each circle chairperson will share the year's calendar with her circle.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13

*In Christ's Love,
Glafi Tinoco*



Wednesday, February 14, 7:30 p.m.

Faith United Methodist Church

2115 West 182nd Street , Torrance, 90504
(310) 217-7000

Rev. Suzanne Swartz, preaching
Pastor, Gardena First Presbyterian Church.

•
Mass Choral Anthem

•
Imposition of Ashes

*Fellowship and refreshments following the Service
You are invited to bring finger foods to share*

February Volunteers

Liturgists

- 04: Mike Rutledge
11: Pastor Lee
18: Carolyn Elder
25: Ellie Mackie

Greeters

- 04: Jane Perkins & Linda Kruse
11: Beth Muraida & Becky Fisher
18: JoAnn & Ed Gulian
25: Craig Elder & Jean Bue

Sign-up sheets can be found on clipboards in the Narthex.



FEBRUARY
BIRTHDAYS

- 2/8 Ralph Colbert**
2/10 Harlan Deeter
2/22 Tom Russ
2/23 Melanie Derr
2/24 Dick Wyckoff
2/27 Brad Stine
Jane Perkins



THE MISSION BELL

El Segundo United Methodist Church

540 Main St., El Segundo, CA 90245

Ph: 310-322-0051 • Fax: 310-322-2750

Email: esumc@sbcglobal.net

Pastor Email: pastoresumc@sbcglobal.net

Web: www.elsegundoumc.org

STAFF

Bishop, Cal-Pac Annual Conf.

West District Superintendent

Pastor

Administrative Assistant

Youth Director

Chancel Choir Director

Pianist

Children's Choir Director

Handbell Director

Custodian

Childcare

Sunday School Teachers:

Adult - Mark Heaney

Sunday School - Various

(Pre K and Kindergarten - 1st to 5th Grade)

Rev. Grant J.. Hagiya

Rev. Mark Nakagawa

Rev. Lee Carlile

Elisabet Port

Eric Iki

Patty Breitag

Kenner Bailey

Joanna McLees

Kathy Rutledge

Blanca Martinez Gonzalez

Paul Idelson, Dora Gregg

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A REPORT FROM YOUR READINESS 360+ TEAM!

Last Saturday we spent the day at Redondo First UMC with the other churches in our cohort. It was a great day of learning, sharing, worshiping, and eating together. We came away feeling tired, but excited about the path forward.

We came away with two goals for our congregation. The first is to invite everyone in our congregation to take the "Real Discipleship Survey." This survey measures six areas of discipleship: a life of worship, a life of hospitality, a life of opening to Jesus, a life of obeying Jesus, and a life of service, and a life of generosity. It will let you see whether you are exploring, beginning, growing, or maturing in these areas.

If that sounds intimidating, not to worry! The Survey takes about five minutes, and it is fun! Our team has already taken the survey, and we learned that very few of us, if any, are in the maturing stage of each of these categories. Many of us are in the exploring and beginning stages. (Yes, even Pastor Lee!)

We'll be rolling out the Real Discipleship Survey on Sunday, February 4, and we hope and pray that most of you will join in. We'll also be asking you to turn in a copy of your results (without your name, of course), so that we can see where our entire congregation stands. This will help your team to tailor our work in the future.

The second goal for our congregation is even more fun—and, perhaps, more important. We hope to link up everyone with a prayer partner during the season of Lent. Logistics are still being worked out, but we hope that this experience will help us to know each other better and to grow our prayer power as a congregation. Watch for details on Sunday, February 18, the first Sunday of Lent.

If you have questions, ask us! We are here for you!

Catherine Bienvenue, Bebe Buchen, Don Carlile, Lee Carlile, Colin Elder, Mark Heaney, Ellie Mackie, Krista Martinez, and Brad Stein



Bishop Hagiya will preach at ESUMC on February 11. Here's is some information about him.

Early Life, Education and Ordination

He graduated with an Educational Doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Pepperdine University in 2012. Abingdon published his book, *Leadership Kaizen*, based on his dissertation on the Traits, Qualities and Characteristics of Highly Effective UMC Clergy in 2013. He has worked and studied with Ron Heifetz and Marty Linksy at the Harvard Kennedy School, and is a member of the newly formed Adaptive Leadership network. A Board member of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, he chairs the Endorsing Committee for UMC chaplains. He recently received his Associate Certified Coaching Certificate (ACC) from the International Coach Federation as a professional certified coach. He is also a Gallup StrengthFinder Certified Coach. He is a graduate of the Claremont School of Theology, where he received M.A., M.Div., and D. Min. Degrees.

Ordained Ministry and Superintendency

Prior to his election to the episcopacy, he served as the Sr. Pastor at churches in Berkeley, Gardena, and Los Angeles, California as well as the Los Angeles District Superintendent and Dean of the Appointed Cabinet of the California Pacific Annual Conference.

Episcopacy

Elected to the Episcopacy in 2008, he served for 8 years in the Greater Northwest Annual Conference, which includes 3 annual conferences: Alaska, Oregon-Idaho, and the Pacific Northwest. He is a member of the newly formed Commission on the Way Forward, tasked with forging a strategy on human sexuality for the United Methodist Church. He chairs the Leadership Focus Area of the 4 Areas of Focus for the United Methodist Church, and is a member of the Council of Bishop's Executive Committee. He is the current chair of the Council of Bishop's Task Force that plans the new Learning Retreats for all active Bishops. He is currently serving as President of the College of Bishops for the Western Jurisdiction.

Family

Grant is married to Janet, a high school librarian, and has three children, Lexie, Co-owner of Torrance CrossFit, and recent mom to Sage Murakami (3 months); Jamie, a professional CrossFit athlete who recently placed 17th in the World CrossFit Games, and Trent, a recent college graduate who is a dad to Clark (1 month).

Grant Hagiya is the Resident bishop of the California-Pacific Annual Conference, which geographically extends to all of Southern California, Hawaii, and Guam.