



HOPE, JOY AND LOVE RISING

Cast~A~Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

APRIL 2022

A BLESSED EASTER 2022

Anne LaMott writes:

"I don't have the right personality for Good Friday, for the crucifixion. I'd like to skip ahead to the resurrection. In fact, I'd like to skip ahead to the resurrection vision of one of the kids in our Sunday school who drew a picture of the Easter Bunny outside the tomb; everlasting life and a basketful of chocolates."

Amen! We've waited 111 weeks for an in-person Easter, longer than any 4-week Advent Journey to Christmas, or any 6-week Lenten Journey. We have endured 781 long days including an election, COVID lock-down, and war in the Ukraine. No wonder some of us feel out of step, uneasy or downright confused. All of this has increased our longing for the Light of an Easter Dawn and our desire for that basketful of chocolates. We have waited over two years.

Remember last year? As some viewed video worship at home, others sang "alleluias" in the parking lot as the best alternative we could manage at that time, shouting out "**Christ is risen, risen indeed!**" and singing "**Christ the Lord is Risen Today**" on breezy, cool Sunday. We are *more than ready* for Easter. What are we waiting for?

We take time to tell the whole truth, and to acknowledge all that transpired between the fanfare of Palm Sunday and the celebration Easter. We ponder pivotal last days in Jesus' life. We honor his journey with the first disciples of the Way as they follow him to the cross. Waiting isn't easy, and yet we pause in the purple of this penitential season to prepare ourselves spiritually to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection. You are invited to worship with us the last Sunday in Lent April 3rd, again on **PALM SUNDAY April 10th** and to join us in worship during Holy Week. The special services are highlighted here.

THE LAST SUPPER

Maundy Thursday, April 14th

6:00 p.m. in our sanctuary

Come celebrate Holy Communion at a simple service at this early hour so you can drive home safely in the daylight.

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF JESUS

Good Friday, April 15th

3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary

Come honor the Journey of Jesus to the cross as we gather with Christians from our local community with leadership offered by pastors and laity from St. Barnabas Episcopal, Nipomo Community Presbyterian, St. Patrick's Catholic Church and Arroyo Grande First United Methodist SLO4Home will receive our special offering (for details see information on page 8)

CELEBRATION OF THE RESURRECTION

Easter Sunday, April 17th

8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. in our sanctuary

A BLESSED EASTER TO YOU!

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis



From the Church Council

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

MASKS: New face mask policy: "Please follow County & State guidelines regarding masks. Masks are strongly encouraged to help protect vulnerable members of our congregation."

Those that may be vulnerable may sit in the transepts, which allows for additional social distancing and allows them enter and exit through the side door facing the parking lot. Please reserve in advance with Mary Hawkins or Rev. Mary B.

FELLOWSHIP TIME (a.k.a. Coffee Hour): We want to bring Fellowship time back into Criswell Hall on a weekly basis. But we need YOUR help. We would like individuals or families to help set up, clean up and/or bring snacks. This is a wonderful way to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries or other important occasions. Ministry and operation teams of the church will also assist. Please sign up at the table in the narthex.

CHURCH COUNCIL IS LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS: Church Council helps determine the overall policies and programs in our Church. We also have a lot of laughter and fun. Our meeting on St. Patrick's Day included a meal of corned beef and cabbage. Many of the ideas and programs of our church are developed through Church Council. Church council includes the chairs of each of the operation and ministry teams. We need a secretary to take minutes and a few at-large members who are willing to contribute their ideas. We usually meet the third Thursday of every other month for one to two hours, so your time commitment is minimal. We have been meeting at 1:00 PM, though the meeting time is flexible depending on everyone's schedule. Please see Rev. Mary if you might be interested.

Joel Anderson
Chair, Church Council

Church Council meeting on March 17, 2022





**WORSHIP
LITURGISTS**



April 3

8:30 a.m.—Lucy Jacob
10:30 a.m.—B.G. Perriguey

April 10

8:30 a.m.—Joseph Brown
10:30 a.m.—Roz Clausen

April 17

8:30 a.m.—Elwood Hyden
10:30 a.m.—Judy Atwood

April 24

8:30 a.m.—John Emery
10:30 a.m.—Robin Isakson



USHERS Ushers are still needed for Worship Services at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.! Training is offered for new or returning ushers. This is another way to extend your discipleship and support our church. Call or talk with Kerren Brown at church for more information. See church directory for contact information. Your church needs you! *submitted by Kerren Brown*



**A Shout-Out to Kids,
Ages 8 Through
High School!**

If you are interested in serving as an ACOLYTE, call Lorie Ford or see me at Church. My phone number is in the church directory.

District Covenant Prayer List

From DS Rev. Melissa Mackinnon

God of Heaven and Earth, we lift up to you all the pain and suffering we see, feel, and struggle to heal. May the power of your Spirit fall upon the Churches, the Communities and all people to do your work of bringing healing and grace to the world. In this time of rapid change and chaos, give us the courage to pause and be in your presence, so that we might be inspired and empowered to live out the life you create in each of us. Amen.

| Prayer Week | Church/Ministry | Clergy Leader(s) |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---|
| April 3 | First UMC of Pasadena | Pastor Amy Aiken & Pastor Greg Norton |
| April 3 | First UMC of Reseda | Pastor Christian Jung |
| April 3 | Thousand Oaks UMC | Pastor Anna Mulford |
| April 3 | First UMC of Canoga Park | Pastor Lynn Westover |
| April 17 | Scott UMC | Pastor Cavalain Hawkins & Pastor Alma Johnson-Hawkins |
| April 17 | Lancaster UMC | Pastor Gregory Pittman |
| April 24 | Magnolia Park UMC | Pastor Chris Fracchiolla |
| April 24 | First UMC of Lompoc | Pastor Steven Joy Price |



Program Ministry

Program Ministry meets April 6th. We have some ideas in the works so stay tuned to the bulletin for more detailed information OR visit the Program Ministry table in the narthex.

Labyrinth Meditation Walk is hosted by Lucy Jacob on April 9th, 3pm at 1117 Sand Castle Court, Grover Beach (Lucy's house). John Hupp, an instructor at Hancock College who teaches Christian meditation, is facilitating.

The Patriot (R) movie with Mel Gibson is being hosted by United Methodist Men on April 9th at 7 pm in Criswell Hall. This movie depicts a widowed farmer, with a brave but brutal military past who decides not to join up when the British arrive in 1776.

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (PG-13) movie will be shown on April 27, 2022 at 4pm in Criswell Hall. Some British retirees (featuring Judi Dench, Maggie Smith and Bill Nighy) decide to outsource their retirement to exotic – and less expensive – India. Lured by advertisements for the newly restored Marigold Hotel and imagining a life of leisure in lush surroundings, they arrive and find that the Marigold is actually a shell of its former self.

Dodger Baseball season has kicked off. **Dodger and Giants play May 3, 7:15.** Your cost will be the ticket (\$39-\$144 Ticket Price), Transportation is \$25 PP. Capacity for van is 15 people. Program Ministry will schedule the game date and transportation. Questions, call 1-805-890-7874.

Discussion for April Meeting

1. **Greener Pastures** is located on 5 acres of land in Arroyo Grande. They rescue, rehabilitate, and provide care for dozens of animals saved from neglect, kill pens, slaughter houses and factory farms. They have limited visiting hours with tickets at \$10 per person.
2. **Visit a local restaurant** for dinner, in our own backyard is **Villa Cantina Mexican** or **Lil Bits Café** for breakfast in Grover Beach.

submitted by Sandy Underwood

The UMM are putting on SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES on April 9th at 7:00 PM in Criswell Hall. ALL ARE INVITED.

The movie will be '**The Patriot**' starring Mel Gibson, whose guerrilla warfare tactics prove pivotal to the US war effort against the British in 1776. Popcorn and beverages will be provided free of charge. Please sign up in advance with Program Ministry in the Narthex.



On May 1st after the second service the UMM are holding a taco bar! For a cost of \$10 each, the taco bar includes taco fixings (meat, cheese, onions, olives, tomatoes, etc.), beans, rice, dessert and beverage. This is a UMM fundraiser for future church needs.

Submitted by Paul Holden



April/May UMW Book: The Nightingale

The UMW Book Club is excited to finally be able to read and discuss The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah! We were going to read it for our February meeting but were unable to get the library book kit until now. Due to its length we have decided to read the first half of it for the Friday, April 22nd meeting at 10:30 A.M. meeting in the church library. (Note the change of date to the 4th Friday of the month due to Good Friday.) We'll finish the book discussion on May 20th.



In this World War II story two French sisters who are separated by circumstances and ideals are able to carry on the "women's war" through resisting the Germans in different ways. One sister remains in her German-occupied country house in order to survive while the other joins the French Resistance in Paris to fight the Nazis. The novel reveals the resiliency of the human spirit and the enduring bonds binding the two sisters together. You will not be able to put this book down!

If you would like to get a copy of The Nightingale, see Patti Melsheimer.

submitted by Judy Leonard



United Women in Faith

All things change and United Methodist Women is no exception.

We have a new name, United Women in Faith.

“We’re a sisterhood acting in faith to tackle the challenging work of the world without hesitation.”

We will work to improve the lives of women, children and youth. We will take action and get things done. Join us in our endeavors.

The Mary Martha Esther Circle has purchased a new rolling cart that fits between the two new stoves in the kitchen. By the time you read this it should be assembled and in its proper place. Lots of new beginnings for the kitchen. MME continues its study of the book, “Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World”.

Members of the JOY circle are continuing their study of the book “Finding Peace in a Troubled World”. They are also in the process of assembling Survivor kits (very clever) for First Responders. Be sure to ask them about these kits to be distributed to Police and Fire Departments as acknowledgement of their work.

Spring brings us Easter Sunday, April 17. UWF will put on a Fellowship Time (formerly called Coffee Hour). We will be meeting inside with cookies, muffins, of course eggs, and serving your choice of tea, hot chocolate or coffee. All are welcome after first service at 9:30 and again at 11:30. It will be so nice to visit again with members and guests. We have a lot to catch up on.



As the season continues with spring flowers and butterflies, we roll into Mothers Day and the Women’s Tea, to be held Saturday, May 7. Get your Spring hats out ladies! We are planning a fancy Tea. Decorate your hats. Tickets will go on sale soon.

Getting my hat ready and excited to have tea with you,

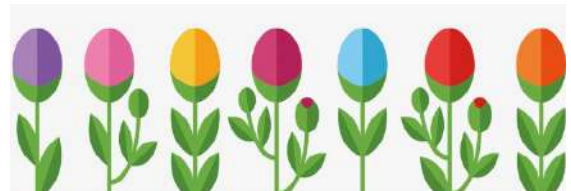
Gerry McGuire



Dates to Remember

April 17 Easter Fellowship, after both services.

May 7 Mothers Day Tea, all women are invited.



**A GALA EVENT — MARCH 1, FAT TUESDAY (SHROVE PANCAKE DINNER)
AND MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION
PLUS DEDICATION OF THE NEW KITCHEN STOVES THAT
THE CONGREGATION AND FUNDRAISING GROUPS HAVE PURCHASED AND
INSTALLED TO SERVE THE MANY NEEDS OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH**



UMM guys Jim, Dick & Kent during set-up

and Bob “guarding” the entrance



Bernie, Ray and Doris at the festive table



Paul making the Shrove Tuesday pancakes on the new stoves!



Rev. Mary awarding “Potholder and OVEN Mitt ” prizes to the outstanding organizers and helpers



Sandy, creator of the King's cakes



Mardi Gras revelers & helpers around



Sister and brother team Lucy and Joel in costume



Left—Elwood finding the “baby” in the first King’s cake

Above—Tina finds it in the second King’s cake & shown with her prize.



Joel and Julie, above Gerry, below



...and this is...Priscilla!



UMM guys Dick, Dave and Bob



ELT Scholarship Time

If you are going to be attending a college, university, or trade school in the Fall, be sure to check out the ELT Scholarship application on the church website, www.worshipweekly.com.

The ELT Scholarship Committee is looking for new and returning applicants. You may reapply for our scholarship as long as you will be a full-time college student during the upcoming school year. The application deadline is May 15, 2022.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to receive some financial assistance for your education. The scholarship can be used for any educational expenses, including travel costs, computers, and other supplies.

Contact Judy Leonard, ELT Scholarship Chair, with any questions.



WHAT IS SLO4Home?

SLO4Home, the organization that will receive our GOOD FRIDAY offering from the Ecumenical Good Friday Service is a new nonprofit working in San Luis Obispo County with the mission of helping refugee families resettle and find new homes on the Central Coast. The goal of "SLO4Home" is to help approximately ten families find safe new homes. After 20 years of war in Afghanistan, U.S. troops withdrew in August of 2021, many Afghans fled their home country looking for safety. Lauren Brown of SLO4Home said **"We'd like to emphasize that these are people who helped the United States, who because of their association with the United States are at risk of their lives."** The directors of the nonprofit say the refugees served as translators and journalists, helping the military and diplomats.

The organization is made up of ten different committees each focused on creating a safety net in every part of the refugees' lives. **"The idea is to successfully integrate these families into our community with job assistance, housing, all the support they need,"** said Vance Rodgers, president of SLO4 Home.

SLO4 Home says for now they are focusing on Afghan families, but they say as more people in the community support their efforts and more money is raised, they also would like to help families from Ukraine.

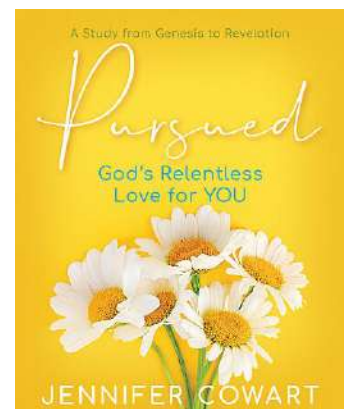
The first families will begin arriving on the Central Coast in mid to late March. SLO4 Home is looking for more volunteers and monetary donations.

Book Study Class

Pursued, God's Relentless Love for YOU by Jennifer Cowart is the new book we will study. There is something in all of us that longs to be loved, to be desired, to be pursued—whether by a special someone, our friends, or others in our lives. This longing for love and acceptance is the underlying story of many of our lives and it's the overarching story we see throughout the Scriptures.

In this six-week study we will explore the main theme that runs throughout the stories in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation: God's relentless love for us.

The new Book Study class begins on Tuesday, April 19th and meets in Criswell Hall at 1:00 PM. It continues for six weeks. Contact Judy Atwood for books.



News from the Mission Team

by Judy Atwood, chair

MISSION TEAM: April 2022

Judy Atwood

MISSION HIGHLIGHTS:

GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE...IN ACTION

Reflection from Margaret Jane Kies, Global Missionary from South Africa serving in Zimbabwe, Africa University. "There is a place, a garden, I like to go to for "time out." I enjoy the privilege of meeting with God in the solitude of the place. I go with my Bible and diary; I walk and sit and read and ask God to speak. Most times, God's voice is very clear. I see God's words in what is going on around me—in winding paths, dead leaves, new growth, small waterfalls, clear (or cloudy) pools, the activities of small creatures. One day, I went there with a great burden of sadness. I sat in a secluded place on the ground and began to cry. A gardener I had not noticed passed by. He peered in to the little grove and asked: "Are you all right?"

The words of a stranger, few as they were, were comforting; they touched my heart. I saw that in our daily routines and work, we often pass by a number of people and not all of them are "all right." Where appropriate, it might be healing to simply ask: Is everything ok? Perhaps we don't need to say any more. The words may be few, but the impact is great if God's hand is at work.

OUR MINISTRY CHALLENGE FOR LENT

The challenge for this Lenten season is "[Feed Your Faith and Feed the Hungry](#)." We will provide a container in the narthex for you to help us do this through Heifer International. We are raising funds for *Flocks of Chickens* at \$20/Flock, *Garden Seeds* \$20/Share, and *Honeybees* \$30/hive.

At the time of this writing, we have raised \$410.90 and half way through Lent. If you want pay by check, mark Heifer in the memo line, or clean out that spare change container we all have! Let's see how many flocks, seeds, and bees we can send to help feed the hungry. Watch for a final total in the next issue.



[Thank you for Feeding Your Faith and Feeding the Hungry.](#)

LOCALLY: 5 CITIES CHRISTIAN WOMEN FOOD PANTRY



Our local Food Pantry is appreciative of the food and cash donations to help care for the those who are food insecure in our community.

Watch for more mission ideas and activities in the coming months. You are welcome to share ideas for projects with us.



[So, my challenge to myself and others who wish to join me, continue to be who you are and be willing to take time to help make a change in the life of others.](#)

**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>Abbreviation Legend</p> <p>CH—Criswell Hall S-Sanctuary K—Kitchen L—Library Room #123 MMR—McMillen Room #113 PL—Parking Lot PS— Pastor’s Study</p> | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| <p>3 Fifth Sunday in Lent 8:30 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Service</p> | <p>4 6:00 PM Quilt Class, Gerry—CH</p> | <p>5 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 10:00 AM Sew n Sews—MMR 10 AM-Noon Prayer Time--S 10 AM Sew n Sews-MMR 11:00 AM UMW Chair Yoga—CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH</p> | <p>6 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH plus 10:00 AM Trustees Monthly Meeting-CH CK WITH DAVE 10:00 AM Program Committee-L 1:30 PM SPRC-CH?</p> | <p>7 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> | <p>8</p> | <p>9 3:00 PM Labyrinth Meditation Walk-Program Ministry 7:00 PM UMM hosts "The Patriot" on big screen—CH</p> |
| <p>10 Palm Sunday 8:30 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Service</p>  <p>Palm Sunday</p> | <p>11 6:00 PM Quilt Class, Gerry—CH</p> | <p>12 No 8:30 Sr Exercise classes this week 10:00 AM Sew n Sews—MMR 10 AM-Noon Prayer Time--S11:00 AM UMW Chair Yoga—CH 6:30 PM JOY Circle-CH</p> | <p>13 9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH plus</p> | <p>14 Maundy Thursday 6:00 PM Service in sanctuary</p>  | <p>15 Good Friday 3:00 PM Ecumenical Service in our sanctuary</p>  | <p>16 Holy Saturday</p> |
| <p>17 Easter Sunday 8:30 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Service</p>  <p>Celebrate the resurrection of our Lord! Happy EASTER</p> | <p>18 6:00 PM Quilt Class, Gerry—CH</p> | <p>19 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 10:00 AM Sew n Sews—MMR 10 AM-Noon Prayer Time—S 11:00 AM UMW Chair Yoga—CH 1 PM Bible Study—CH 6:30 PM JOY Circle-CH</p> | <p>20 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH plus 10:00 AM UMW Steering Committee—L 5:30-7:30 PM AGUMCC Open House</p> | <p>21 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 10:30 AM SPRC-PS</p> | <p>22 10:30 AM UMW Book Club—L</p> | <p>23</p> |
| <p>24 Second Sunday of Easter 8:30 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Service 11:30-12:00 AGUMCC Sunday Social</p> | <p>25 10:00 AM UMM Cabinet—L 10:00 AM Peoples Kitchen Prep-K 6:00 PM Quilt Class, Gerry—CH</p> | <p>26 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 10:00 AM Sew n Sews—MMR 10 AM-Noon Prayer Time—S 11 AM-Peoples Kit-Lv 11:00 AM UMW Chair Yoga—CH 1 PM Bible Study—CH</p> | <p>27 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH 9:00 AM Trustees Workday—CH plus 10:00 AM Mary-Martha-Esther Circle—MMR</p> | <p>28 8:30 AM Senior Exercise—CH</p> | <p>29</p> | <p>30</p> |



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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 WORSHIP?

There are dates available in the upcoming months for your dedications for flowers in the church sanctuary. Contact the church office for dates and dedications.



Your floral tribute will be placed on the altar for the worship services on Sunday and recorded for the video made for that week. After the services you can pick up the arrangement or we will get those beautiful flowers to you. The cost remains at \$25 .

Orders can be made, as in the past, from the Grand Bouquet which we can do upon your request. Or orders can be placed with Brad Bettencourt (long-time florist himself who actually owned a flower shop for years) who has created lovely arrangements with Trader Joe’s flowers used in our worship services.

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



| | |
|------------------|-------|
| Jack Cuddy | 04/01 |
| Janine Moore | 04/01 |
| Paul Holden | 04/04 |
| Patti Melsheimer | 04/06 |
| Pam Bauske | 04/07 |
| Grant Cuddy | 04/08 |
| Shirley Werling | 04/08 |
| Don Gugeler | 04/11 |
| 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
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April

2022

Visit us on the web at worshipweekly.com

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Children's Center Chronicle



Who are these two costumed characters ?

And why are they posed with the two kitchen ovens in the background ? See pages 6-7 to find out!