



HOPE, JOY AND LOVE RISING

Cast~A~Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande MAY 2024

What is your church story?

As part of our 140th anniversary celebration the Communications Committee is asking everyone to tell their church story. These will be collected and published as part of our celebrations. This May issue of the Cast~A~Net newsletter is featuring two of these stories, and we are looking forward to receiving yours!



LORIE FORD'S "MY CHURCH STORY"

My parents came to Arroyo Grande after getting married in 1940. They attended our church in the Village here, which is now called the Harvest Church.

Along with my grandparents they soon joined, and my three brothers and I were all baptized there from 1942 to 1953. As membership grew, our Rev. Ken Criswell spearheaded a building project and purchased this property to build where we now worship.

My Bill and I were married here in Criswell Hall in 1964, which served as our sanctuary until the permanent one was built. Our daughters were baptized here as were our four grandchildren.

Having a church family for love and support all these years is one of God's greatest blessings.

My church is engraved in my soul.
Lorie Ford

BERNIE AND MARY HAWKINS' "MY CHURCH STORY"

Mary and I were looking for a church. I was going to St. Pat. Mary was from up in Paso Robles. The first people we met were Peggy and Dick Gainer. They were so friendly and asked us to come to Criswell Hall for coffee and cookies. First United Methodist Church people are very friendly to us.

Tom Egan became my very good buddy. We would watch Dodger games. Tom asked me for help and we did a lot of work around and on the church. Tom was an instigator. He asked all the men to help to refurbish and re-stain all the woodwork outside the church.

Pastor David and Sarah became good friends to Mary and me. We went to Dodger games and dinners. We met Bill and Gladys. They got us into

card games with Peg Gallop, Phil McKibben, Doris and Ray--this church is a wonderful family church.

Vacation Bible School was fun. Pauline Castillo and Don Gugeler were actors from the Bible class. Don played his saxophone as a snake charmer; Pauline handed out organic fruits and dates. My wife Mary and I had groups of children we worked with. So many fun times with Maddy and our church family and children face-painting with Carolyn.

Mike Johnson and I became United Methodist Men President for a few years.

God bless our church family. What a great time in our life--and many more.

Bernie & Mary Hawkins



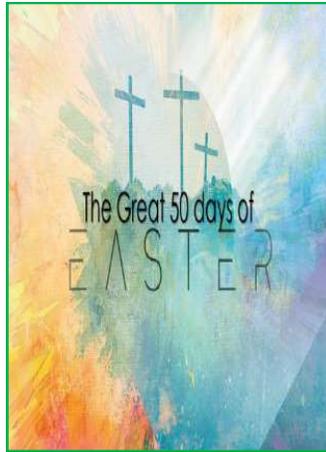
To our newsletter readers: As you can see from above, your story can be how you found your church, past events and pastors, what you love about your church, memorable events that may be happy, funny, inspirational or embarrassing that you laugh about now. Please bring them to the office or send by post or email or drop in a box in the Narthex.



CONTINUING OUR GREAT FIFTY DAYS OF EASTER!

May 5th, 2024
Sixth Sunday of Easter
WALKING IN THE LIGHT: With Friends
1 John 5:1-6, John 15:9-17

May 12th, 2024
ASCENSION OF THE LORD
Festival of the Christian Home
WALKING IN THE LIGHT: With Family
Acts 1:1-11, John 17:6-11



May 19th, 2024
PENTECOST
WALKING IN THE LIGHT: With the Spirit
Acts 2:1-21

May 26th, 2024
TRINITY SUNDAY
Peace with Justice Offering
WALKING IN THE LIGHT: With Hope
Romans 8:22-27, John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

TREASURER'S REPORT

We have a wonderful congregation. We exceeded our goal for the Easter offering, Christmas offering and Thanksgiving offering. Regular tithes and offerings are running above plan. Expenses are expected to continue above plan. Insurance and benefits costs continue well above the official inflation rate. Our Fiscal Year is not yet over, so please continue your generous giving

Looking at our expenses by category: 64% of our expenses goes to worship and ministry. This includes the pastor, Christian education and our wonderful music ministry. 14% goes towards maintaining our beautiful facility, utilities, insurance and repairs. 14% goes to support expenses, which includes the church office, administrative assistant, bookkeeper and their related expenses. 8% goes towards Apportionments. Apportionments support our Annual Conference as well as missions and programs of the United Methodist Church throughout the world including Africa University in Zimbabwe and United Methodist, historically Black colleges and universities, in the United States.

Looking at our expenses by expense type: 71% of our expenses go towards are paying our staff and their benefits, including our pastor, music staff and administrative assistant. We honored our hard-working staff this past month. Another 16% goes supporting our church facilities and operations, including utilities, maintenance, repairs, office supplies, postage etc. 8% goes towards our apportionments. 5% goes toward worship, music and Christian education supplies and equipment.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Joel Anderson

**WORSHIP
LITURGISTS**



MAY 5

8:30 a.m.-----Joseph Brown
10:30 a.m.-----Cristy Van Hook

MAY 19

8:30 a.m.-----Sharon Roemer
10:30 a.m.----Rose Ann Steiner

MAY 12

8:30 a.m.-----Mary Thronson
10:30 a.m.-----Nancy St. Laurent

MAY 26

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

~ submitted by Jan Treat



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 May 5, 2024 - June 23, 2024

Pray for the continued vision of the UMC in the California-Pacific Conference

"Ending spiritual and physical hunger."

--Reverend Melissa MacKinnon

Prayer week begins on:	Church/Ministry	Clergy Leader(s)
5/05/24	Scott UMC Magnolia Park UMC	Pastor Alma Johnson-Hawkins Pastor Rich Garner
5/12/24	First UMC of Lompoc First UMC of Lompoc	Pastor Terry Fisher Pastor Pamela Fisher
5/19/24	St. Mark UMC of Santa Barbara St. Mark UMC of Santa Barbara	Pastor Robb Fuesler Pastor Liz Aguilar
5/26/24	St Paul's UMC of Oxnard Korean UMC of Oxnard	Pastor Rachel deboss-Haigler Pastor Chae Hon Nam
6/02/24	First UMC of Ventura First UMC of Ventura	Pastor Diane Rehfield Pastor Cindy Huskey
6/09/24	Ridgecrest UMC Chatsworth West UMC	Pastor Wesley Elmore Pastor Eric Iki
6/16/24	North Hills Hispanic Mission St. Andrew UMC	Pastor Ervin Aguilon Pastor Eric Scott
6/23/24	Santa Maria First UMC Sherman Oaks UMC	Pastor Neil Platon III Pastor Garth Gilliam

The Trustees are currently soliciting bids for two projects – an ADA approved ramp for the parking lot entrance to McMillan room and the cleaning of our solar panels. Once the bids are received and approved work will begin on these two projects.

The Trustees planned an all church work day to catch up on needed cleaning and “sprucing up” of the exterior of the buildings as well as the cleaning of areas in the kitchen and the sanctuary. Look for pictures next month!

~ submitted by Dick Melsheimer,
President



The Church Council spent time at their April meeting evaluating our Easter celebration and making plans for next year! If you have comments or suggestions, please contact a member of the Church Council. Their names are listed on the poster in Criswell Hall.

We have all been examining our various job descriptions and making plans accordingly. If you have program suggestions or activities that you feel we should develop or continue, please let me know.

~ submitted by Patti Melsheimer, chair



TACO BAR on CINCO DE MAYO, SUNDAY MAY 5th

The United Methodist Men are putting on a Taco Bar on Cinco de May Sunday after the 2nd service. Eat in or Take out. Taco Bar, Rice and Beans for only \$10 per person. Tickets are available at the door.

~ 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.

MAY 2024



You're Invited!

SPRING LUNCHEON

is coming up during the Merry Month of May!

On **Saturday, May 11 from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM** is this special event, so get your tickets soon! Wear your spring hats. A delicious salad bar awaits us at a cost of just \$10 person. Entertainment has already been planned. Come join us and bring a guest!

On **Wednesday evening, May 15**, we will be hosting, here at our church, a group of families going through Breast Cancer. They are visiting on retreat with Little Pink Houses, and we will serve them their evening meal. Anyone able to help, please let Mary Hawkins or Patti Melsheimer know.

Saturday, July 13, United Women in Faith, by popular demand, will have Bingo and Pizza and Ice Cream Sundaes. Save the date!



CIRCLE AND GROUPS: All women invited to attend.

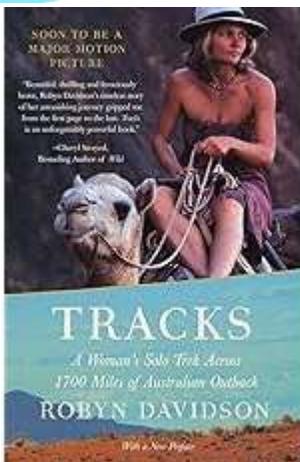
Mary, Martha Esther Circle meets the last Wednesday of each month at 10 AM in the McMillen Room. Come join us, we'd love to have you! Contact Mary Thronson.

JOY Circle meets the third Tuesday of each month in members' homes at 3:30 PM. Contact Kerren Brown.

UWF Book Club meets the third Friday at 10:30 AM in the Library. Contact Judy Leonard for a book.

Sew and Sews meet every Tuesday in the McMillen Room from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM. 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



UWF BOOK CLUB TO DISCUSS TRACKS ON MAY 17th

Join us on May 17th as we discuss Tracks, the true adventure of Robyn Davidson who challenged herself to a 1,700 mile trek across the outback of Australia. With only four camels and her dog as companions, she discovered her ability to overcome adversity as she braved inclement weather, scary insects and snakes, and human adversaries. She found how much she loved Australia's wilderness and its indigenous people as well as the camels she trained for the journey.

If you would like to read Tracks and discuss it with our small group, see Judy Leonard for a library copy of it. We will meet at 10:30 A.M. in the church library on Friday, May 17th.

~submitted by Judy Leonard



FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

June 1st we are planning the Sweet Spring Nature Walk and Lunch with Connie Clark hosting in Los Osos. The photo above is from the Sweet Springs website. To carpool, we will be leaving the church at 9:30 for the 10:00 AM walk. See details and sign up at the Connections table.

Looking ahead, mark your calendar for June 22 at 10:00 AM when we go to visit the home and garden of Scott Trees. His gardens are inspirational. I understand he has 400 rose bushes! What an invitation, so don't miss out! Sign up at the Connection table.

There will be no movie Sunday, May 26, as it is Memorial Day weekend.

~ submitted by Gerry McGuire

The Eternal Flame Sanctuary Lamp

Hanging from the ceiling on the left side of the sanctuary is the eternal flame sanctuary lamp. It was donated by Peggy Gallop in the 1980's in memory of her husband Robert. The sanctuary lamp is found in all Jewish synagogues and Catholic churches as well as many Methodist, Anglican, Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox churches. In Methodist churches it symbolizes the presence of Christ in the sanctuary. The tradition of the eternal flame dates back to the Old Testament when God told Moses that a lamp filled with the pure oil should perpetually burn in the Tabernacle (Ex 27:20-21).



PRESCHOOL PANCAKE BREAKFAST ON APRIL 6 AT CUSTOM HOUSE IN AVILA

It was a success! We sold 165 tickets, and we also had a 50/50 drawing and Opportunity Drawing. The event raised \$2750 to help send the staff to Pasadena to attend a conference.

Thank you to the many church people who came to the event and all those who supported the event.

~ submitted by Maddy Quaglino



ELT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DUE ON MAY 15, 2024

Students are encouraged to apply for the Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship which was established by Arroyo Grande First United Methodist members. Both graduating high school seniors and undergraduate college students who have maintained a minimum 2.5 GPA in their college work may apply.



Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship applications are now available on-line (www.worshipweekly.com) and in the church office. The purpose of this scholarship is to show support for our deserving students enrolled full-time in accredited universities, community college, or technical schools defray the cost of their education.

Only students who are or have been active participants in the Arroyo Grande First United Methodist Church may apply. The completed application with required attachments must be mailed or turned in to the church office by Wednesday, May 15th.

ELT Scholarship checks will be sent to recipients upon proof of registration in Fall, 2024 college classes.

Judy Leonard, ELT Scholarship Committee Chair

Committee Members: Nancy Gerrish, Judy Heiney, BG Perriguet, and Jan Treat

JOIN THE CHOIR EVERYONE IS WELCOME



A very attentive choir visitor bringing joy to choir

TO MY WONDERFUL CHURCH FAMILY

Please accept my heartfelt thank you for all your cards, hugs, calls and sympathy at Mom's passing.

Your love and kindness didn't go unnoticed!

May Mom's legacy live on!

All my love,
Peggy Bridges

*STAFF PARISH APPRECIATION SUNDAY
HONORING CHURCH STAFF AND COVID ANGELS
ON APRIL 14, 2024*



from left: Brad Bettencourt, Leonard Lutz, Rev. Mary Birgelaitis, Lila and Joel Anderson, Frances Robertson, Carolyn Russell, Julia Burns, Maddy Quaglino, Dennis Eiler, Susan Thronson, Michael and Connie Clark
(not in photo Mike Coho & Jamie Foster)

Presenters on behalf of SPRC were Rose Ann Steiner, Patti Melsheimer and Mary Hawkins

General Conference is in Progress

Friday April 19th to Friday May 3rd

Stay tuned for news from our General Conference in the June Castanet.



News from the Mission Team

What is Peace with Justice Sunday?

Peace with Justice Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost, May 26th. “Pentecost celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit calling for God’s shalom. Peace with Justice witnesses to God’s demand for a faithful, just, disarmed, and secure world.” (Par. 263.5, “The Book of Discipline 2008.” This Special Sunday is a denomination-wide celebration intended to raise awareness that even in a world plagued by war and terror, violence and destruction, people of faith have a clear call to build peace with justice. As United Methodists, our yearning for peace must move us to act.

Did you know that our General Board of Church and Society holds a non-governmental, consultative status with the United Nations? This status allows us to participate in UN meetings, consultations and conferences. In so doing, we recognize and renew our call for social transformation, for the quest to open the doors of opportunity for all, to distribute resources more equitably, and to provide better care for persons in need.

The annual conference keeps 50 percent of donations for Peace with Justice ministries in the conference, providing educational resources, building and sustaining relationships, and helping mobilize networks to engage in social advocacy and action. Fifty percent of the donations collected fund national and international peacemaking



ministries and grants. We achieve peace with justice efforts by working with the World Council of Churches, interfaith and ecumenical bodies, and secular organizations for social-justice policies and programs that seek the wholeness of shalom for all of God’s people. An online grant award process is available to all churches.

I believe that one of the wonderful aspects of The United Methodist Church is that we can do so much more together than we ever could do on our own. Your generosity provides funding to strengthen and foster just, equitable and durable solutions to the root causes of conflict. If you choose to give to this Special Sunday appeal, there will be a special envelope in your May 26th Sunday bulletin. Checks can be made out to FUMC-AG and write Peace with Justice on the memo line at the bottom. Bless you!

~ submitted by Priscilla Alquist, Mission Team Chair

TOILETRIES FOR THOSE IN NEED

The three major local organizations that work with those in our community that are in need of food and/or housing assistance are the **5 Cities Christian Women’s Food Pantry**, the **People’s Kitchen** and the **5 Cities Homeless Coalition**. Our First United Methodist Church has a long history of helping support them in a variety of ways and responding to their calls for assistance. It has come to our attention that all three organizations are in need of personal toiletries for their participants. Please see the list of new, small individual hotel-size toiletries below. Your Mission Team will gather your donations of toiletries in a basket on the Mission Table in Criswell Hall and deliver them on a rotational basis to all three groups.



Hint: Ask your friends for their donations as well and share the story of the good works these organizations do in our community:

- Shampoo and conditioner
- Bar soap and deodorant
- Sunblock and hand lotion
- Tooth brushes and tooth paste (no floss needed)
- Small size towelette packs
- Disposable razors with plastic handles
- New socks

P.S. If you happen to have bath towels that you are tired of, but that are still serviceable, the **People’s Kitchen** has a use for them! They can also be left on the Mission’s Table in Criswell Hall.

Thank you for your generosity!

Priscilla Alquist, Mission Team Chair



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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<p align="center">Abbreviation Legend</p> <p>CH-Criswell Hall S-Sanctuary K-Kitchen L-Library Room #123 MMR-McMillen Room #113 PS-Pastor's Study HR-Handbell Room #115 PL-Parking Lot</p>			<p>1 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 10:00 AM Fellowship Ministry Team-L 6:30 PM Worship-PS</p>	<p>2 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal--S</p>	<p>3 Memorial Service for Peg Gallop 2:00 PM Sanctuary</p>	<p>4</p>
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<p>5 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir UMM Taco Bar after 2nd service</p>	<p>6 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH</p>	<p>7 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</p>	<p>8 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</p>	<p>9 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 1:30 PM Finance-L 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 11:30 AM-1:30 PM UWF SPRING LUNCHEON</p>
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<p>12 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir </p>	<p>13 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH</p>	<p>14 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:00 AM Sew and Sews-MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 7:00 PM Trustees-MMR</p>	<p>15 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 2:00 PM Church Council-MMR</p>	<p>16 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:30 AM Staff Parish--PS 4:00 PM Children's Ctr Board--MMR 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S</p>	<p>17 10:30 AM UWF Book Club-L</p>	<p>18</p>
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<p>19 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band and Handbells 10:30 AM Traditional Service with Chancel Choir and Handbells</p>	<p>20 6:00 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH</p>	<p>21 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:00 AM Sew and Sews--MMR 11AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH 3:30 PM JOY Circle-member's home 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR</p>	<p>22 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH</p>	<p>23 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR</p>	<p>24 11 AM Nominations-PS</p>	<p>25</p>
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<p>26 8:30 AM Contemporary Service with Praise Band 10:30 AM Traditional Service PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY</p>	<p>27 4:30 PM Communications-Library 6:00 PM No Quilt Class today  Church office closed on holiday</p>	<p>28 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 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR</p>	<p>29 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 9:00 AM Church Work Morning, everyone invited-CH 10:00 AM Mary-Martha-Esther Circle-MMR</p>	<p>30 9:00 AM Senior Exercise-CH 5:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR</p>	<p>31</p>	
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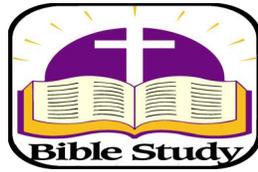


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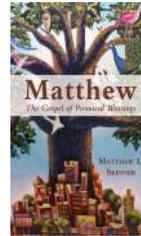
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TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Matthew: The Gospel of Promised Blessings
 by Matthew L. Skinner
 Facilitated by Nancy St. Laurent

The study of this book began in April and is continuing. Books available from Nancy.
Tuesdays 1:00 p.m.
Criswell Hall



This is an enthusiastic group that welcomes all to join!



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.



Hilary Henderson	05/02
Sophia McHugh	05/08
Karen Wise	05/08
Marilyn Balster	05/11
Judie Neufeld	05/12
Doris Douglas	05/16
Mark McHugh	05/17
Vinnie Paredes	05/18
Paul Jacob	05/22
Rob Isakson	05/25
Roger Ridley	05/26
Arianna Davis	05/30



HOSPITALITY SNACKS

<u>MAY 5</u>	Methodist Men
<u>MAY 12</u>	UWF
<u>MAY 19</u>	Trustees
<u>MAY 26</u>	Staff-Parish
<u>JUN 02</u>	Finance
<u>JUN 09</u>	Nominating
<u>JUN 16</u>	Fellowship
<u>JUN 23</u>	UWF
<u>JUN 30</u>	Fellowship

Hope, Joy & Love Rising



First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

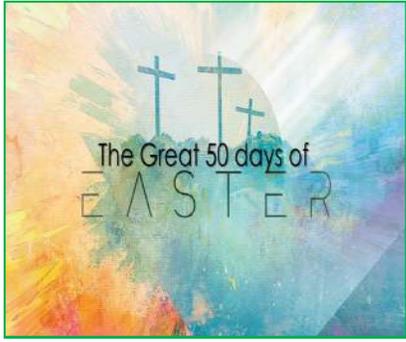
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2024



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Your Church Story

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Children's Center Chronicle

Visitations are Fun! Cards are Blessings

Jim and I had a fun time visiting Don and Helen Gugeler recently. It was within a few days of Don's 99th birthday and we found about 8 relatives in the kitchen of their daughter and son-in-law having a great time-sharing memories, old and new, as well as handicrafts they were working on while chatting. We felt welcomed like a part of the family and shared our memories too! After taking a picture to memorialize our visit, Don and Helen shared how much visits from their church family meant to them. In reality, it was we who were blessed, feeling the love of our dear friends and capturing the moment with a photo.



Helen and Don Gugeler

At about the same time, we received a gracious thank you card from Peg Gallop. She shared how much comfort she received from our reaching out to send cards to her during her recent illnesses. It took our breath away and we will always treasure this final act of kindness from her.

Remember, it only takes a few minutes to make a big difference in the lives of our congregation.

Try it - you'll be doubly blessed!

Priscilla & Jim Alquist