



"The kingdom of God is like a net that was cast into the sea" - Matthew 13:47

Cast-A-Net

First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

April 2025

Holy Week **2025**

Palm Sunday—April 13, 2025

**POWERFULLY LONELY,
YET NEVER ALONE**

Luke 19:28-40

The celebration of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem marks the beginning of Holy Week as we gather in worship. Some congregations celebrate this as Palm/Passion Sunday. Others celebrate this as Palm Sunday with additional worship opportunities during Holy Week.

There will be two worship services as usual at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. So come celebrate worship and celebrate with us.



Maundy Thursday—April 17, 2025

**The Last Supper and Ritual of Tenebrae
6:00 pm in our Sanctuary**

Remembering the last days of the earth journey of our Lord, we gather in worship on Maundy Thursday for a simple celebration of the Last Supper punctuated by a reading of the Passion Narrative from the gospel with the Ritual of Tenebrae. One by one candles will be extinguished as we listen to the story of Jesus entering the darkness of betrayal, violence and crucifixion as his life is taken away. We are combining these remembrances in lieu of offering two services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Easter Sunday—April 20, 2025

8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Worship

And God said "YES!"

Luke 24:1-12

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis

MEET OUR INTERIM CHOIR DIRECTOR TRICIA STEWART

I am more than pleased and blessed to be the Interim Choir Director of this church! I've been asked to introduce myself, so here goes!

I was born and raised in Santa Maria. Music was just about all I ever wanted to do. My parents indulged me with piano lessons, guitars, voice lessons and even gave me a 5 string banjo in the 4th grade. They drew the line at drums, but I learned to live with the pain.

I was active in high school with choral groups and drama. In fact, I was part of a summer drama program at Righetti High School where I met Dennis Eiler. I think you know him. Working again with Dennis feels like wearing your best comfortable, spiffy shoes. I love being a part of the team with him and Brad.

I met my husband, Tim at Hancock College when I was 18. We married a couple of years later and moved away to Oregon. I majored in Music Education at the University of Oregon in Eugene. My degree had a concentration in choral conducting.

After Tim and I finished our education in Oregon, we moved to Pasadena where we both attended Fuller Theological Seminary. Attending Fuller was a spiritual rebirth for me. To study under such scholarship and devotion as the professors embodied was an explosion of faith and intellect.

Although my background was in choral, my first teaching assignment was band and that became the professional constant. I have taught Jr. High band for a total of 21 years...all instruments. To that I can add 1 year of choir, also at the Jr. High. I have taught recorders and general music all the way down to kindergarten and back. I ended my teaching career at Nipomo High School, where I taught choir, concert band, marching band, jazz band classroom piano and guitar.

In addition to this, I was the choir director at New Life Community Church in Pismo for over 8 years. I was in charge of ensembles, Christmas and Easter Concerts and served on the Worship Committee.

In retirement, I conducted the Rotary

Sing-along at the Clark Center for 3 years. While in charge, I hired Dennis to work with me on that project. I also met Leonard Lutz while doing that. It is a delight to land here with both of them.

I currently serve on the Harvest Festival Committee. I hire the bands and organize some of the venues, as well as MC the opening ceremony.

I have two grown daughters Talitha is a Registered Nurse in Oregon. Shamarah is a former Special Ed teacher and current writer who lives with her husband in Los Osos and our only granddaughter. We chose their names while Tim was studying Biblical languages, FYI. Good luck with pronouncing them!

I look forward to serving this congregation. I feel like I have already found a church home, the welcome has been so amazing!



MEET OUR NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT BLANCA PLACENCIA



My name is Blanca Estela Placencia. I was born in Mexico but raised in the U.S. since I was 3 years old. I am married and have 4 wonderful children, 1 girl and 3 boys. I also have 7 granddaughters, 2 grandsons and with god's blessing I will be a great Nana this year. I come from working in Agriculture as a Human Resources person for many years. I am very outgoing and enjoy spending time with the family and my grandchildren who definitely keep me busy. I also enjoy cooking and keeping myself busy. Thank you everyone for the warm welcome.

NEW OFFICE HOURS

Church office will be open from
8:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Monday - Thursday

UWF REPORT



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.

A new circle, is forming especially for working women and those looking for an early evening circle. The new circle has had their first meeting with 5-6 new enthusiastic members. They're in the process of organizing their group. They have a book picked out to study. If you are interested, contact Susan Thronson or leave your name with the office. Be one of the founding members. The next meeting is April 9 at 6:30PM in the McMillen Room

We have a date for our United Women in Faith Sunday. We will celebrate, April 27. We will recognize members and present our new officers for the coming year.

Looking ahead to May 10, when the annual tea will be held, a fashion show is being planned. If you would like to be a model let us know. We welcome models with a fun attitude. The tickets will go on sale soon at \$10 per person. Bring your mother, daughter, sister or friend. This is one of our most well-attended events. Mark your calendar now.

Our next Bingo night is planned for August 9th. There will be a new price structure with reduced rates for children.

Circles and groups: All women are invited to attend. **Mary, Martha Esther Circle** meets on the last Wednesday of the month. We are studying a book on Moses.

Joy Circle meets the third Tuesday of the month, 3-5 pm in members' homes. Check with Kerren Brown for more information.

Sew And Sews meet every Tuesday in the McMillen Room from 10 until 1. Bring a sandwich if you want to stay for lunch. We encourage those interested in quilting, crocheting, knitting and just plain visiting and sharing.

Book Club meets 3rd Friday, in the library, at 10:30. Contact Judy Leonard for a book if interested

News from the Mission Team

Serving at the People's Kitchen on January 31st 2024 was well received and rewarding for all involved. The Mission Team will be preparing about 80 hot meals for People's Kitchen on April 29th. Some of the groceries needed in the preparation of the meals is available at the People's Kitchen from donations they have received, reducing the cost to the Mission Teams budget.

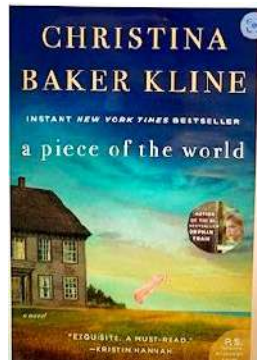
May 4th 2025 is Native American Ministries Sunday. The Native American Ministries offering bolsters the work of Native American ministries in annual conferences throughout the United States. These ministries exist in rural and urban settings, including reservation and other community ministries. The Native-American Ministries offering also provides scholarships for the Native Americans studying at United Methodist schools of theology and empowers congregations to find culturally appropriate ways to minister to their communities through Christ's love.

The United Methodist Church is a worldwide church engaged with congregations and communities throughout the world. We bear a long-standing commitment to serving the vulnerable and promoting global justice. The United Methodist Church has an agency, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), that provides relief and assistance in response to natural and human made disasters in addition to supporting programs in areas of migration health, food security and environmental sustainability. UMCOR has often partnered with U.S. relief offices, which have been suspended for 90 days via executive order. This has caused disruption with numerous aid programs, jeopardizing the delivery of healthcare, education and psychosocial support to millions globally.

May the words of the Psalmist be upon all our hearts as we discern our living in these days. "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the affected and the destitute. Rescue them from the hand of the wicked. Psalm 82:3-4.

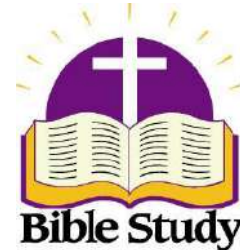
April UWF Book Club Selection: A Piece of the World by Christina Baker Kline

This month's book, based on the true story of the inspiration for Christina's World, one of Andrew Wyeth's famous twentieth century paintings. Christina is tied to her family's Maine farm by her health issues. She seems destined to live a quiet life until she meets Andrew Wyeth. Their friendship opens a whole new world for her.



If you would like to join in the discussion of this fascinating story, join the UWF Book Club on **Friday, April 25th, at 10:30 A.M.** in the Church Library. See Judy Leonard to borrow a book.

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY



Facilitated by Nancy St. Laurent

Meets on

Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. in Criswell Hall

The Group is currently studying

"The Final Days"

by Matt Rawle

Books are available from Nancy.

All are welcome to join us!

ELT Scholarship Applications Due by May 15th

The Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship Committee is eagerly awaiting applications for this year's round of ELT Scholarships. If you have been involved with our church and plan to attend a university, community college, or trade school as a fulltime student in the fall, please check out our scholarship application and instructions on the church's website (www.worshipweekly.com). Applications are also available in the Church Office. New and returning college students may apply for the scholarship.

Completed applications must be turned into the church office by Thursday, May 15th. If you have any questions, contact Judy Leonard.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to ease the financial burden of advanced education just a little bit.

We Need **YOUR** Help!

A church survives by its volunteers. We need your help. These positions take only a few hours a month and can fit around your schedule.

- Ushers are needed for both service
Please contact Kerren Brown
- Video Camera operator, especially 2nd Service
Please contact Mike Coho or Susan Thronson
- Sound Board operators needed at both services
Please contact Mike Coho or Susan Thronson
- Prayer Coordinator
Please contact Rev. Mary
- Help with New Member Classes
Please contact Rev. Mary
- Holiday Flowers Coordinator (Christmas & Easter)
Please contact Rev. Mary

Fellowship Ministry

Thursday, April 3 Cabrillo High School Aquarium Tour in Lompoc. Admission is a free-will donation. To carpool meet at church at 12:55, or meet at Aquarium at 1:45pm. Aquarium is located at 4350 Constellation Road, Lompoc.

Sunday, April 27. 4pm Movie-"Six Triple Eight" Academy Awards Nominated film. During WWII the only Women's Army Corps unit of color stationed overseas takes on an impossible mission in a drama based on a true story. The movie is free and includes popcorn and other refreshments. It will be in Criswell Hall.

Saturday, June 21 is a possible date for a return visit to the beautiful Gardens of Scott Trees and Bob Davis. If you missed it last year, put it on your calendar now, you won't regret it.


Sunday, July 20 1:30pm PCPA at Marian Theatre in Santa Maria is performing the play "*Something Rotten*". This is a Shakespearean Play that is funny and witty. If you are interested, please let us know by **Sunday, June 15th**. The cost is \$40.50 per person.

Submitted by, Gerry McGuire

Worship Liturgists

Date	8:30	10:30
April 6	Joe Brown	Patti Melsheimer
April 13	Susan Thronson	Tim Stewart
April 20	Mary Thronson	Rose Ann Steiner
April 27	Sharon Roemer	Joyce Singleman



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Abbreviation Legend CH-Criswell Hall HR-Handbell Room #115 K-Kitchen L-Library Room #123 MMR-McMillen Room #113 PL-Parking Lot PS-Pastor's Study S-Sanctuary		1 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Sew & Sews-MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CJ 5 PM Bell Choir HR 7:00PM Trustees MMR	2 9 AM Church Work Morning-CH 10 AM Fellowship Committee-L 6:30 PM Worship Committee-PS	3 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Craft Workshop -MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 12:55PM Cabrillo High School Aquarium tour 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S	4	5
6 8:30 AM Informal Worship Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service	7 6 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	8 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Sew & Sews- MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1PM Bible Study-CH 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR	9 9 AM Church Work Morning - CH 10 AM UWF Steering-L 1:30 PM Mission Team-MMR 6:30PM New Women's Circle-MMR	10 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S	11	12
13 PALM SUNDAY 8:30 AM Informal Worship Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service	14 6 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	15 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Sew & Sews- MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study-CH 1:30 PM Finance-L 3 PM JOY Circle-homes 5 PM Bell Choir-HR	16 9 AM Church Work Morning - CH 2 PM Church Council-MMR	17 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 3:30PM Children's Center Board-MMR 6PM Maundy Thursday/Tenebrae Service-S	18 	19
20 EASTER SUNDAY 8:30 AM Informal Worship Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service	21 6 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	22 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Sew & Sews- MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 1 PM Bible Study - CH 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR	23 9 AM Church Work Morning-CH	24 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10:30 AM Staff Parish--PS 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S	25 10:30 AM UWF Book Club-L 11 AM Nominations-PS	26
27 SUNDAY 8:30 AM Informal Worship Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service 4:00 Free Movie-CH Six Triple Eight	28 People's Kitchen Food Prep 1:30 PM-K 4:30 PM-Communications-L 6 PM Gerry's Quilt Class-CH	29 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 10 AM Sew & Sews- MMR 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH People's Kitchen Food Distribution 11:00AM 1 PM Bible Study - CH 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR	30 9 AM Church Work Morning-CH 10 AM Mary-Martha-Esther Circle-MMR	31 9 AM Senior Exercise-CH 11 AM Chair Yoga-CH 5 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal-HR 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal-S		

Easter Lilies

The name says it all...or does it?

By Nan Lippitt

Since biblical times, various flowers have been associated with Easter, including, but not limited to Calla lilies, Madonna lilies, and Easter lilies.

The Latin word for lily is *lilium*, which derives from the Greek word *leirion*. The word means “true,” and specifically referred to the Madonna lily, which the Greeks revered. The word can also signify “pure,” “rebirth,” or “passion.” Think “Passion Play.”



The Calla lily, or Calla, is also known as the Irish Easter Lily as well as other names. The Calla lily is not actually a lily. Instead, it is a member of the Araceae family. Calla lilies are native to southern Africa. They have naturalized throughout the world, including the Central Coast; many of us have Callas in our yards.

The Madonna lily looks similar to the Easter Lily. It is endemic to the Middle East and the Balkans. This may be the flower that grew at Gethsemane after the Resurrection. It is associated with Mary, hence its name.



The Easter lily is native to southern Japan and Taiwan. Nowadays, it is grown almost exclusively in the Smith River Valley in Del Norte County in northern California.

In Matthew 6:28, Jesus says, “And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” In addition to Bible references, lilies are depicted in religious art. Moreover, cross pendants with Callas or Easter lilies are worn.

I have a childhood memory of celebrating Easter at church. Every year a cross about 7' tall, that was made by a parishioner, was beautifully covered with about 80 to 90 Calla lilies. Please share your experiences or memories of Callas or Easter lilies!



**MORRO BAY NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
and STATE PARK, March 15, 2025**



Everyone that participated on the Morro Bay outing had a nice time. First, we visited the State Park Natural History Museum. The small museum is a gem: many interesting, interactive exhibits, excellent taxidermy specimens, and great views. We were amazed at how small the birds' eggs were relative to the size of mature birds. Did you know that the American Crow has blue-colored eggs? We learned the importance of Big, Old, Fat, Fertile, Female fish (BOFFFF.) Yes, ichthyologists (fish scientist) do use this term. BOFFFF are critical for sustaining a species. After visiting the museum, we walked along the marina just below. To our delight, we saw four otters very close between two docks! Then, we walked a 0.7 mile loop trail that offered sweeping, beautiful views of the estuary and in all directions. It was a most enjoyable trip!





**St. Patrick's
Day
Celebration**
March 17



**DON GUGLER
CELEBRATES HIS
100th BIRTHDAY
APRIL 11**

WISH HIM A HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



BOB AND MARY JORSTAD
OUR DANCING DYNAMIC DUO

By Nan Lippitt

Fred Astaire step aside. We have our very own Fred and Ginger in our midst! Bob and Mary Jorstad have been kicking up their heels, both literally and figuratively, for their fifty-six years of marriage. They are recent arrivals to the Central Coast, joining family in Nipomo not quite two years ago. While living in Bemidji, Minnesota, they would go out dancing with Bob's parents. After Bob completed graduate school in Idaho, they moved to Charleston, Illinois where he joined the faculty at Eastern Illinois University as a Professor of Geology. Mary was Program Director of a Dental Hygiene Program. At a health outreach event she met Ollie Mae Ray, (Ph.D. Dance) who taught dance at the University. From that point on, it was Cha-Cha-Cha! Bob and Mary would get free lessons in exchange for doing demonstrations for others. The pair is especially talented. Not only do they perform the dances, they also choose the music and Bob does the choreography, which is no small feat (not feet). They do myriad ballroom and Latin dances: Samba, Merengue, Texas 2 Step, Hustle, Fox Trot, West Coast Swing, Tango, Bolero, Bachata, Waltz and many more. Mary in an understated manner said, "It's a lot of movement." Bob said that the Hustle is the most demanding. Think serious cardio. They performed on public television for several Christmas shows. They are even featured on the cover and throughout a dance textbook. Bob



plays the bass guitar with the Praise Band. Mary often operates the sound board at First Service. Presently Mary is recovering from some injuries. They hope to get back into the swing of things, including a performance at the Christmas Variety Show!

P.S. Be sure to ask Bob about his Elvis impersonation.

Meet Our CHURCH STAFF

Church Office: 805-481-2692

E-mail: fumcag@yahoo.com

Website:

www.worshipweekly.com

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/fumcag

Pastor: Rev. Mary B. Birgelaitis

E-mail: mbirgelaitis@gmail.com

Office Administrator:

Blanca Placencia

Webmaster: Jamie Foster

Children's Education Director:

Carolyn Russell

Interim Choir Director:

Tricia Stewart

Praise Team Director:

Mike Clark

Choral Pianist: Dennis Eiler

Handbell Choir Director:

Leonard Lutz

Worship Video Editor:

Susan Thronson

Bishop:

Rev. Dottie Escobedo-Frank

District Superintendent:

Rev. Garth Gilliam

Children's Center (Preschool):

Director: Madrigale Quaglino

E-mail: agumcc@sbcglobal.net

Phone: 805-381-2223

SUNDAY HOSPITALITY SNACK HOSTS

April 6 Fellowship Ministry

April 13 Staff-Parish

April 20 Communications

April 27 Children's Center

May 4 Methodist Men



WOULD YOU LIKE TO HONOR A LOVED ONE WITH FLOWERS?

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.

Contact Blanca in the Church Office

The cost for altar flowers is \$30.



4/1	Jack Cuddy
4/1	Janine Moore
4/4	Paul Holden
4/6	Patti Melsheimer
4/6	Laurie Moore
4/7	Deborah Bradley
4/8	Grant Cuddy
4/8	Shirley Werling
4/11	Don Gugeler
4/15	Mary Jorstad
4/15	Jack Moore
4/24	Ryan Odam

Did we miss your birthday?

If so, please contact the church office and we will be glad to add your birthday to our monthly birthday list.

LEGACY GIVING

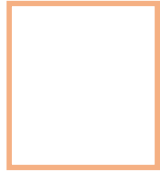
If you missed the Legacy Giving Workshop, Personal Philanthropy brochures from the California-Pacific United Methodist Foundation are available at the Connections Table in the Narthex, or you may contact them directly at 626-568-7347 or on the web at www.cpumf.org to help create your own personal or family legacy.

Hope, Joy & Love Rising



First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

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



Visit us on the web at: WorshipWeekly.com

**Find us on Facebook at United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande
www.facebook.com/fumcag**

April 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Thu. Apr. 3** Cabrillo High School Aquarium
leave church 12:55pm
- Thu. Apr. 10** Children's Center Open House,
6-7pm
- Sun. Apr. 13** Palm Sunday
- Thu. Apr. 17** Maundy Thursday Service 6PM
- Sun. Apr. 20** Easter Sunday
- Sun. Apr. 27** UWF Sunday
- Sun. Apr. 27** Children's Center Art Show
- Sun. Apr. 27** Free Movie: Six Triple Eight 4PM
- Mon. Apr. 28** People's Kitchen Food Prep 1:30
- Tue. Apr. 29** People's Kitchen 11:00
- Sun. May 6** Methodist Men Taco Bar, 11:30
- Sat. May 10** UWF Tea & Fashion Show
- Thu. May 15** Everett Lee Taylor Scholarship
application deadline
- Sun. May 25** Staff Appreciation Sunday
- Sun. Jun 15** Deadline to reserve tickets for
"Something Rotten" play by PCPA on 7/20

Mission Statement of the First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande

The First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande is a joyful, active and fun-loving faith community. We worship on Sunday mornings and offer opportunities for Christian growth, fellowship, health and increased well-being all week long. Members represent a wide range of theological and political views and commit to treating each other with love and respect in the midst of differences. We nurture spiritual growth and a deeper understanding of God's love in Christ as we work together to spread the love of God in our community and in the world.