



"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

JULY 2025

275 North Halcyon Road * Arroyo Grande, CA 93420 * 805-481-2692 * www.WorshipWeekly.com

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!!!

What a wonderful retirement party and farewell! Thank you, thank you, thank you for a great time, a perfect send off and a lot of fun. This congregation never ceases to amaze me. I was bowled over by the preparation, your creativity, the decorations, the food, and your generosity. Imagine my joy!

I am grateful that my last appointment as a United Methodist pastor itinerating was to Arroyo Grande First. Some people go out tired, discouraged, and disappointed after a difficult "last stint" in ministry, but I have had the pleasure of ending my 42 years in MY HAPPY PLACE, near the beach, with all of you. Thank you for all you have done and for the blessing you have been.

The celebration was perfect. I appreciate the many notes, cards, gifts, and greetings that have come my way. You are generous in every way. The greeting cards were filled with cash and lovely gift cards that will inspire me to take a long overdue trip, pursue a hobby or spend a little on something special as I enter into a more relaxed way of life. My laptop gave up right after I finished that last sermon, so your gifts have helped me buy a new laptop to take into retirement.

The party was a BLESSING filled with "blessings" --- a beautiful mum plant, a lovely Cala Lily, some great windchimes complete with a retirement blessing, gift

cards and cash galore! I received a lovely pencil drawing created by Carolyn Russell and so many other delightful surprises like a gold-tipped long-stemmed rose from the Table of Ten. I LOVE the photo book, and the QUILT is ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL. One card was separated from its gift, so if you are a generous soul who does not receive an individual "thank you", I hope that you are reading this and will receive my gratitude as I thank the congregation altogether.

I am not leaving the area, at least for now. I want to stay put, catch up with myself, unwind, make sure my pension arrives in my bank account and my insurance is hunky dory before I go running off somewhere, but eventually I'll get back to Hawaii after a twenty-four-year hiatus from the annual trips I used to take. I will be visiting friends in Michigan, out-of-state relatives and hosting long-time friends at home on the Central Coast. Maybe I will run into YOU at Avila Beach, grocery shopping, at one of Dennis Eiler's gigs or Leonard Lutz's concerts. Meanwhile, best wishes to you. Keep the aloha spirit going and trust the Holy Spirit to lead First United Methodist Church of Arroyo Grande into the future with hope.

Sincerely,

Rev. Mary Birgelaitis.

Greetings from the Pastor

Dear Church Family,

My family and I are excited! We look forward to getting to know you, as we become part of the congregation, working together as one. We are honored to be your pastoral family. We are going to have a great time and fun in ministry. We will see lives changed and transformed. Because of you and your faithfulness, lives will be impacted. We will continue to make a difference in the Five Cities area. I can't wait to get started. I am so impressed with you and the creative ways you reach out and engage the community.

It is true, I was a Nazarene. Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank recommended me for transfer into the United Methodist Church (UMC) and the Board of Ordained Ministry endorsed my transfer. After months of interviews and meeting other requirements, on June 11, 2025 the Cal-Pac UMC Conference voted to transfer my credentials. I am now a Provisional Full Elder in the United Methodist Church.

What does provisional mean? This affords me the time and an opportunity to learn and understand the methods and ways of the UMC. I ask for your grace as I learn. I have three classes to take for college credit. I already have a Masters of Divinity degree. The classes that I will take are classes specific to being a UMC pastor. I will be taking UM History, UM Polity, and UM Doctrine. In case you are wondering, Nazarenes and Methodists are from the same theological vein of Wesleyan Arminianism, also known as Wesleyan Theology or Methodist Theology. The two are very close theologically. However, I feel that I am a better fit in the UMC.

While I am "provisional", I am part of a program called Residence in Ministry (RIM). I will be part of this for three years. This is an opportunity to continue to learn, alongside peers. It is a wonderful program that Cal-Pac requires. It might even help me learn all the acronyms!

The first week of August I start one of the classes, and the first RIM session. The second week of August I have the next RIM session. The third RIM session is in October, and the fourth is in April. As for the other two college level classes the next session starts in January.

Now let us put all of that aside and let me tell you some of my connection to the UMC. My father was a Nazarene pastor. When he retired, they moved to Tennessee. He made friends with a UMC District Superintendent (DS.). The DS asked if he would do pulpit supply. My father has done pulpit supply for different UMC churches since then and this year retired completely at nearly 76 years of age. My stepmom (my mother died about 20 years ago from cancer) also was doing pulpit supply for UMC churches. Additionally, my brother who is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene, has for the last 10 years or so served as a pastor of several UMC churches in Tennessee. He has not transferred like I have, but he is not going back to the Church of the Nazarene and is solidly a UMC pastor. My transfer has actually encouraged him to start the process too. I have multiple friends who are now part of the UMC. I have several other friends who, by my transfer, are encouraged to do the same. We didn't fit in the Nazarene Church for various reasons. We can discuss that another time.

I love the UMC and feel this is my theological, and pastoral home. I fit here and can breathe. When I graduated from seminary I had thought about joining the UMC and being a pastor in the UMC. While I attended and served at Kansas City First Church of the Nazarene, we also attended United Methodist Church of the Resurrection where the author Rev. Adam Hamilton is the pastor-in-charge.

I hope this gives you a little insight and also helps you give me grace as I learn the structure and systems of the UMC. At the Annual Conference when they announced my transfer, the Bishop said "Welcome home. We are glad to have you join us" and gave me a hug. Indeed, we have come home to the UMC.

It was very nice getting to worship with you on June 8. My family and I are looking forward to our first Sunday in worship with you on July 6, 2025.

Rev. Wesley Thompson

Meet Pastor Wes' Family



Kristi writes "Praise the Lord brothers and sisters. I am thankful to God for this new chapter." She is an extrovert who loves being with people and enjoys helping, being in fellowship and hosting in her home. Her dad, mom, and brother live in Oregon. She is a pastor's kid and has been a pastor's wife for 25 years."

Katelyn is 23 years old. She is attending CSU, Long Beach where she is studying to be an English-ASL interpreter. She loves crocheting, Disney, and Broadway. Her favorite color is teal. Katelyn's service dog is a Shorkie (Shih-Tzu / Yorkie mix). Her name is Nagisa Umi Mei, just Nagisa for short. Her name comes from 3 different anime characters.



Jonathan is 20. He will be attending UC, Santa Barbara studying for his Political Science degree. He would also like to pursue the path to become an airline pilot. He enjoys learning, going to the gym, and helping people.



Joshua is 18. He will be attending UC, Santa Barbara studying for a communications degree. He enjoys playing volleyball, learning, helping people, and he graduated high school one year early. He was a part of the Morro Bay Yacht club where he learned to sail and enjoyed participating in those sail boat races.



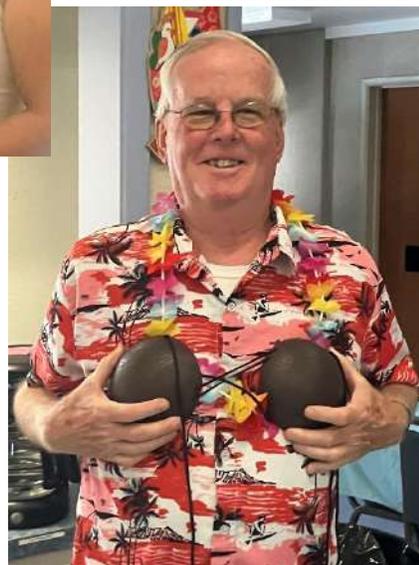
Makiyah just turned 16. She loves playing the piano/keyboard, singing, sewing, art, helping people, and playing volleyball.

Pax is 14. He loves playing basketball & volleyball. He will be going to high school this coming school year. He has an interest in learning to play the guitar. He loves learning and helping people.



Alexander (Xander) is 12. He has been drumming in worship services for a few years. He loves playing basketball, volleyball, and helping people.

Aloha Rev. Mary



SCOTT TREES' GARDEN TOUR



PENTECOST 2025



The Spirit was moving on Pentecost Sunday! District Superintendent Garth Gilliam gave a rousing sermon and introduced our new pastor, Rev. Wesley Thompson and his family. Three members joined: Leona Beerup, Susan Exon and Dale Inman. Acolytes were honored for their service and the puppets performed.





July



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|-----------|
| | | <p>1</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>10AM Sew & Sews MMR</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> <p>1 PM Bible Study-CH</p> <p>7 PM Trustees, MMR</p> | <p>2</p> <p>9 AM Church Work Morning-CH</p> <p>10AM Fellowship Ministry, L</p> | <p>3</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> | <p>4</p> | <p>5</p> |
| <p>6</p> <p>8:30AM Informal Worship Service</p> <p>10:30AM Traditional Worship Service</p> | <p>7</p> | <p>8</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>10AM Sew & Sews MMR</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> | <p>9</p> <p>9 AM Church Work Morning- CH</p> <p>10 AM UWF Steering Committee</p> <p>1:30 PM Mission Team-MMR</p> <p>6:30PM Bible Study MMR</p> | <p>10</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> | <p>11</p> | <p>12</p> |
| <p>13</p> <p>8:30 AM Informal Worship Service</p> <p>10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service</p> | <p>14</p> | <p>15</p> <p>11:00AM Nancy Baughman Memorial</p> <p>1:30 Finance. L</p> | <p>16</p> <p>9 AM Church Work Morning-CH</p> <p>2 PM Church Council-MMR</p> | <p>17</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>10:30 Staff-Paish, PS</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> <p>4:30PM Children's Center Board-MMR</p> | <p>18</p> <p>10:30 AM UWF Book Club-L</p> | <p>19</p> |
| <p>20</p> <p>8:30 AM Informal Worship Service</p> <p>10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service</p> | <p>21</p> | <p>22</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>10 AM Sew & Sews- MMR</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> <p>1 PM Bible Study - CH</p> | <p>23</p> <p>9 AM Church Work Morning-CH</p> | <p>24</p> <p>9 AM Senior Exercise-CH</p> <p>11 AM Chair Yoga-CH</p> | <p>25</p> | <p>26</p> |
| <p>27</p> <p>8:30 AM Informal Worship Service</p> <p>10:30 AM Traditional Worship Service</p> <p>4:30PM Free Movie Fundamentals of Caring</p> | <p>28</p> <p>4:30 Communications Library</p> | <p>29</p> <p>10 AM Sew & Sews- MMR</p> | <p>30</p> <p>9 AM Church Work Morning-CH</p> <p>10 AM Mary-Martha-Esther Circle-MMR</p> | <p>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</p> | | |



United Women in Faith

Hope you are planning to join us as we welcome our new Pastor Wesley Thompson and his family July 6th. Following the second service we will have a Santa Maria style Bar B Q, with tri -tip and chicken, along with coleslaw, Potato salad, watermelon and strawberry shortcake. Please sign up at the connections counter so we can make sure we have enough food.

Bingo and Pizza! Saturday, August 9th, 5:00 to 7:00 pm. As this is a fundraiser, tickets will be \$20, \$10 for children under 12. Our caller will be Bernie Hawkins.

Our annual Tea will be Saturday, September 13, 11:30 to 1:30. We are putting together a Fashion Show. Rose Ann Steiner will be the M C. Tickets go on sale August 17th for \$10 per person.

Circles and groups:

Mary, Martha Esther Circle meets the last Wednesday of the month at 10 am in the McMillen Room.

Joy Circle meets the third Tuesday of the month, 3-5 pm in member's homes. Check with Kerren Brown for information. They will not be meeting for the summer see you in September.

Wednesday evening Bible Study meets 2nd Wednesday at 6:30 PM. Contact Susan Thronson.

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, visiting and sharing. The Prayer Shawl Ministry will resume but we need knitters and crocheters. We're calling for help!

2025-2026 ELT SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO IAN BEARD



On May 25th Ian Beard was the recipient of the 2025-2026 ELT Scholarship. This scholarship was set up as a memorial to a former pastor of our church, Everett Lee Taylor. Ian is one of the more than 50 students who have received it. This will be the third year he has been selected.

Last year as a sophomore at San Diego State University Ian continued to excel in his studies as an astronomy major. He also got more involved in the astronomy club, the Schwartz Astronomical Society (SAS) as the Events Coordinator. He organized outreach activities for SAS, including an overnight camping trip at Palomar Observatory. He loved the opportunity to share explore their passion for astronomy. Next year he will share be the co-president position in SAS.

His proudest achievement has been becoming the only undergraduate planetarium show presenter at SDSU. After reaching out to a presenter and much practice, Ian received his presenter certificate in December and has given shows every week the past semester.

This summer Ian will be enjoying the chance to work with a professor at the University of New Mexico. While there he will be doing original research with a professor on the topic of radioastronomy. The final project will be a paper published with his name. This unique experience will support his goal of ultimately earning his Ph.D. in astronomy and becoming a professor conducting research and teaching astronomy courses.

Ian has received his \$2,000 ELT Scholarship which he can use to help pay for his college expenses. We are excited about his activities, accomplishments, and passion for astronomy.

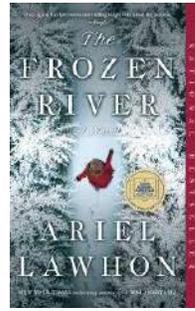
If you would like to contribute to the ELT Scholarship Fund, you can donate at any time. Checks can be made to FUMCAG denoting ELT Scholarship on the memo line.

We Need **YOUR** Help!

A church thrives through volunteers. We need your help. These positions take a few hours a month and can fit around your schedule.

- Ushers are needed for both services.
Please contact Kerren Brown
- Video Camera operator for both services.
Please contact Mike Coho.
- Sound Board operator, especially 2nd Service.
Please contact Mike Coho
- Photographer needed for 2nd service.
Please contact Joel Anderson

July UWF Book Selection: The Frozen River



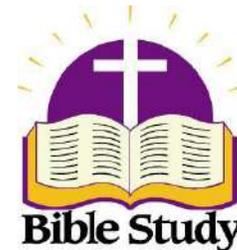
The UWF Book Club will meet on Friday, July 18th at 10:30 A.M. to discuss a historical mystery based on the life and diary of a renowned 18th century midwife and healer, Martha Ballard. The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon is a captivating story about Martha Ballard's attempts to tell the truth about what happened in the winter of 1789 in a small Maine community near the frozen Kennebec River. She has recorded every birth and death in her diary as well as scandals and lies. Ultimately, she gets involved in trials and false accusations as she pursues justice for the innocent victims. In a time when women were not supposed to speak up, she defies expectations. Join us on July 18th at 10:30 A.M. in the church library to discuss The Frozen River. This month readers will need to purchase their own copy of the book or share a book with another person. See Judy Leonard or Mary Whitson for ideas about where to get a book. We hope to see you on July 18th!

Contact Judy Lenard if need a book.

News from the MISSION TEAM

The Mission Team reports that there are students interested in helping with our People's Kitchen food preparation and serving. There have also been requests from our church members wanting to provide meals to local homeless. The mission team hosted Janna Nichols from 5 Cities Homeless Coalition, who explained how volunteers can prepare meals for community cabin complexes. The Mission Team decided to take a break for the month of August but will be back in full force in September,
Thank You Mission Team for your wonderful work throughout the year.

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!**

CHILDREN'S CENTER PROMOTION



Fellowship Ministry

July 6, Fellowship Ministry will put on a Santa Maria style Bar B Q. Tri tip and chicken will be served, with Coleslaw, potato salad, watermelon and strawberry shortcake. This is our opportunity to welcome our new Pastor Wesley Thompson and his family. Sign up and be sure to come and meet them.

Fifteen of us will be attending The PCPA, Marian Theatre, Santa Maria to see the Play, "*Something Rotten*" July 20th, at 1:30. Plans are to leave and possibly carpool after church at 12:30. It is labeled as the funniest musical comedy in 400 years, by Time Out, New York. Combining sixteenth century with twenty-first century Broadway flair.

The movie for the end of the month, is "*The Fundamentals of Caring*" on July 27, at 4pm. It is about a writer turned caregiver and an ornery teen with Muscular Dystrophy bonding after they set off on a road trip in search of offbeat landmarks and adventure, with Paul Rudd, Craig Roberts, and Selena Gomez. Free.

There will be a tour of Arroyo Grande Village in August.

Liturgists

| Date | 8:30 | 10:30 |
|---------|---------------|-----------------|
| June 06 | Joe Brown | Kent Unsworth |
| June 13 | Sharon Roemer | Rosslyn Clauson |
| June 20 | Lucy Jacobs | Tim Stewart |
| June 27 | Elwood Hyde | Judy Leonard |

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. Wesley Thompson

E-mail: wes.thompson@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

HOSPITALITY HOSTS

July 06 Fellowship Ministry

July 13 Endowment/ELT

July 20 Communications

July 27 Mission Team

Aug 03 Trustees

Aug 10 Staff Parish

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HONOR A LOVED ONE WITH FLOWERS?



Do you enjoy the beautiful flower arrangements placed on the altar on Sunday? Dates are available for flower dedications in upcoming months. Your floral tributes will be placed on the altar for both Sunday morning services and can be picked up after the second service or on Monday during office hours.

The cost for altar flowers is \$30.

Contact Blanca in the Church Office



Happy Birthday
wishes to everyone born in the month of
JULY!

7/02 Colin Odom
7/03 Lee Fonseca
7/03 Mary Whitson
7/06 Bud Johnson
7/08 Peggy Bridges
7/08 Michael Rohla
7/11 Larry Baughman
7/11 Bernie Hawkins
7/14 Dick Melsheimer
7/15 Valerie Beard
7/15 Faye Cuddy
7/19 Joel Anderson
7/20 Christine Ridley
7/23 David Bolterman
7/31 Julia Weitkamp

Did we miss your birthday?

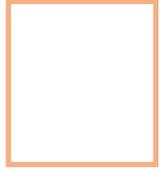
If so, please contact the church office and we will be glad to add your birthday to our monthly birthday list.

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

July 2025

Upcoming Events

- Sun. Jul 06 Pastor Wesley Thompson
Preaches, BBQ Luncheon
- Sun. Jul 20 "Something Rotten" by PCPA at
Marion Theater, Santa Maria
- Sun. Jul 27 Free Movie Night
- Mon. Jul 28 Peoples Kitchen Food Prep
- Tue. Jul 29 Peoples Kitchen Food
Distribution
- Sat. Aug 09 Bingo & Pizza Night, 5PM
- Sat. Sept 13 Woman's Tea & Fashion Show
- Sat. Sept 07 Harvest Festival Parade
- Sat. Sep 13 Women's Tea and Fashion show
- Sat. Oct 04 St. Francis Day - Blessing of the
animals
- Sun. Oct 26 Alternative Christmas
- Fri. Nov. 07 Christmas Boutique
- Sat. Nov. 08 Christmas Boutique
- Sun. Nov. 09 Christmas Boutique

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.