

# THE MESSENGER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF  
RIVERSIDE, 4845 BROCKTON AVE., RIVERSIDE, CA 92506 (951) 683-7831



## MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

BY THE REV. JI TAI KIM

**From “Stayin’ Alive” to “How Deep Is Your Love”:**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021!**

By the Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

A Happier and Healthier New Year 2021 to you all, my Beloved Church Family and Friends!

Last month, I enjoyed watching the new 2020 HBO documentary movie entitled **“The Bee Gees: How to Mend Your Broken Heart.”** I am familiar with many of the Bee Gees’ hit songs from the 1960s and 1970s, and I was fascinated to learn about their epic life story.

It is amazing to learn that the Bee Gees (BG stands for “Brothers Gibb”) composed over 1,000 songs not only for themselves but also for Barbra Streisand,

Diana Ross, Kenny Rogers & Dolly Parton, and Celine Dion. Even though two of the Gibb brothers have already gone now, their timeless songs still resonate in many people’s hearts.

Two of their famous songs have come to my mind as I reflect on the past year and the new year to come: “Staying’ Alive” and “How Deep Is Your Love.” Whatever the original intentions, I would say that the year 2020 was the year of “Stayin’ Alive,” due to the pandemic crisis. The New Year, on the other hand, would be the year of “How Deep Is Your Love.”

We hope and pray that in 2021 we will go back to the normalcy that includes our in-person gatherings for worship. Just as

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none of us could have known such a horrible pandemic would be coming at the beginning of 2020, no one can predict when exactly we can go back without fearing COVID. However, the transition has already begun with the good news of the vaccines amid the deadliest times, just as many people say that we are in the “beginning of the end of the pandemic.”

You have survived and endured in 2020. Well done! Yet, the transition is still going on. This January might be another devastating month. The “Stayin’ Alive” mode should continue by keeping ourselves safer and healthier. At the same time, we must deepen our relationships with Christ and with people in God’s love and care, in this New Year.

**“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17, NRSV).”** We must admit that we are mortal beings who have limited times in life. If your love for God is deep enough, your love must overflow for others so that God’s love can be perfected in your life.

There is another song called, “Too Much Heaven” by the Bee Gees. This song was specially intended to support the people in need around the world. The singers expressed that there is no such thing as “too much heaven” or “too much love,” for there are so many people in need of love. We, as Christians, are called to share God’s love with everyone. There is no such thing as “too much love.” Thanks be to God!

New Year’s Joy and Blessings,  
*Pastor J. T. Kim*

## POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS 2020

In Memory of Richard and  
Laurie Williams  
by Pat Williams

In Honor of our Family and Friends, who  
are so important to us,  
and in Memory of our Loved Ones who  
have gone before us  
by Loretta and Dave Cudney

In Memory of Dr. Edwin A. Roberts  
by Bob, Benita and Joan Roberts

In Honor of Steven Beals, Kristin Beals,  
Josie, Melissa and Jonathon Williams  
and in Memory of Steve, Denny  
and Doug Beals,  
and Don and Margaret Henderson  
by Pat Beals

In Honor of Katrina, Patrick, Shawna  
and their families,  
and in Memory of my mother,  
Gerry Marr  
and daddy, Clint Marr  
by Cindy Marr

In Memory of Loved Ones  
by James and Genette Sizer

In Memory of Mary Nelson  
by Bob Nelson

In Memory of Bert Rakow  
by Norma Nelson

In Honor of Alice Wymer  
and in Memory of our Parents  
by Ron and Dianne Purkey

In Honor of Pastor and Mrs. J. T. Kim  
by Roy and Cheryl Riggs

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## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN JANUARY EVENTS

### **Almond Wesleyan Circle**

Monday, January 11, 2021 at 1:00pm

via Zoom. Lyn Knowles will send out invitations. If you have not attended before and would like to, please contact Lyn Knowles at 951-753-7490.

### **UMW Executive Board Meeting**

Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 1:00pm via Zoom. Zoom invitations will be sent to board members.

### **East District Leadership Training**

Saturday, January 16, 2021 at 10:00am via Zoom.

Contact Pam Conlin 951-237-5470 for registration information.

### **UMW Bible Study**

Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 6:30pm  
via Zoom.

Ladies, please come and join us for a new Bible Study and fellowship – on Zoom, of course. The Bible Study, which is being held in conjunction with Corona UMW, will begin on January 14, 2021 at 6:30pm. Our Cheryl Riggs will be leading the study. The book we will be using is The Bible Jesus Read. It can be purchased at Christian book stores and in several formats from Amazon. If you are interested in attending please contact Lyn Knowles and she will send you an invite 951-743-7490.

### **UMW Meeting**

Wednesday, January 20 at 1:00pm  
(this is a new meeting time)

The program for January is  
Pledge and Remembrance.

Lyn Knowles will send out invitations.

If you have not attended before and would like to, please contact Lyn Knowles at 951-753-7490.



## UNITED METHODIST MEN'S MEETING

Our next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 10, 2021. It will again be conducted via Zoom, and will begin at 11:15 AM following church services. We would very much like to thank Lt. Col. Ron Purkey, USAF (Ret.) for his very informative and interesting talk at our meeting in December.

Our featured speaker for this meeting is Mr. Clay Perkins, a retired physicist who worked at General Dynamics, Convair Division, in San Diego during the early days of the space program. Clay will discuss the early history of the United States space program and his work from this time in developing the Atlas rocket. The Atlas was used to launch John Glenn and the other Mercury astronauts into earth orbit.

He will also cover early experiments and testing in a zero-G environment via airplane flights where he and the astronauts would experience periods of weightlessness for approximately 30 seconds.....and then they would do it again.....and then again! The ultimate roller-coaster ride!

Please plan to join us for this event via Zoom. Zoom information will be sent via email soon. We very much look forward to a time of fellowship early in the New Year.



*Poinsettia Dedications (cont'd.)*

In Memory of our Parents  
Sylvia and Jim Alfred  
With love, by Anne Alfred

In Memory of our son David  
By Bill and Lynn Ashworth





## **FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

Bob and Patty Binford 11

## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

Nancy Neumann	1	Dan Cork	15
Itsel Updegraff	2	Ron Bayer	16
Donna Kidder	3	KwangJin Kim	18
Daniel Noble	3	Tina Rajaratnam	18
Margaret Berger	7	Charlotte Stevenson	20
Helen Kirkwood	8	Lee Ann Barrett	22
Alex Othon	9	Pam Conlin	22
Jeff Ashworth	11	Myles Pfeifle	22
Linda Hice	11	Mary Herrmann	25
Andrew Angel	12	Jennifer Walker	26

## **FUMCOR STAFF**

**Pastor:** Rev. J.T. Kim

**Office Manager:** Becky Ruiz

**Secretary:** Stephanie Chandler

**Choir Director:** Yvonne Flagg

**Bell Director:** Gayla Lonsbery

**Organist:** Robert Phillips

**Preschool Director:** Karen Wilson

**Youth Director:** Steve Grimes

**Custodial Manager:** Jesse Ruiz

**Campus Supervisor:** Brad Tomlinson

First Church Riverside has active committees making decisions about missions, church property and finances, the worship experience and fellowship groups. Come be part of the work of the church!



## A CHRISTMAS FABLE

*By Kathleen Phillips*

In the pleasant village adjacent to Santa's castle at the North Pole, two elves were sitting in their favorite coffee shop, sipping hot cocoa, when Winkie, an elf who lived on the east side of town, noticed Santa exiting a bakery across the street, half-eaten cookie in hand, chocolate crumbs in his snowy white beard.

"Doesn't that man ever stop eating sugary junk food?" Winkie asked his friend, Blinkie, who lived on the west side of town. "Doesn't he care about his health? You know that, if something happens to him, we'll all be out of work. We'll lose our homes! We'll starve!"

Blinkie replied, "Oh, you're always exaggerating. Santa is in fine shape. Besides, what child would want to sit on a bony lap? They like cuddling up to Santa's warm, squishy belly. Santa gets his job done just fine the way he is. Everyone puts on a few pounds around the holidays, anyway."

The two elves continued to debate the issue of Santa's weight, and then the debate turned into an argument. Soon, a crowd had gathered, and the banner headline in *The North Pole Gazette* the next day was "Riot Breaks Out Over Weighty Issue."

Santa, the subject of all the attention, no longer felt comfortable going out in public to greet his neighbors with a cheery, "Ho! Ho! Ho!" and, perhaps, "Have a cookie or two." He felt like people watched him closely every time he started to eat something. Winkie and his crowd would shake their heads and mutter, "Tsk. Tsk. Tsk." They made nasty comments and jokes about Santa's weight that they thought he couldn't hear, but he did.

Blinkie and his friends sent baskets of treats to Santa. They told Santa that he was "pleasingly plump," and they reminded him to finish everything on his plate, because there were starving elves at the South Pole who would be grateful for such a meal.

Tired of being treated like a criminal or a child, Santa retreated to the uppermost room in his castle, where he remained, alone.

Days passed, but no one saw Santa. As you can guess, Winkie blamed the situation on Blinkie, while Blinkie said that it was all Winkie's fault. From his room in the castle tower, Santa heard the arguing and the loud noise. He became so stressed about it, he collapsed.

Old Doc Twinkie told the elves that Santa had nearly died from the trauma, and unless things changed, he certainly would perish. Doc further notified them that, unless a miracle occurred, Santa would not be making his annual trip to deliver toys to all the children of the world.

Winkie was very upset. "It's all my fault, you know," he admitted to his friend, Blinkie. "Here I was, worrying about Santa's possibly dying from overeating, and I'm the one who almost killed him—and the rest of us, too, since we wouldn't have jobs to buy food or pay the rent."

Blinkie sighed a long, deep, sigh, and replied, "You didn't do this alone. Every argument takes at least two people. Who are we to try to control Santa, anyway? Maybe we should let him decide what he should eat, and we will decide what we should eat." "Sounds good to me," said Winkie, and he gave his friend a hug.

All the elves worked extra hard that year, and Santa only heard the sounds of toys being made and elves singing happily. He recovered completely, and on Christmas Eve, he left the North Pole in his loaded sleigh, laughing and waving at the elves he loved so much.

And Santa lived forever.

*THE END*

*The moral of the story: Love and let live!*