

JANUARY 2024

The Messenger

First United Methodist Church of Riverside
4845 Brockton Ave. Riverside, CA 92506

So Long For Now!

By Pastor J.T. Kim

Dear Family & Friends:

New Year Greetings and Blessings to you all!

As many of you are aware, by the time you read this, I will already be on my "Formational & Spiritual Growth Leave," also known as "Sabbatical Leave," from Jan. 1 through March 31.

I am truly grateful to God for you all, for supporting and blessing me with this special opportunity that comes after having served seven years in ministry. I express my deepest gratitude to the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (Chair: Greg Laird), the Church Council (Chair: Lyn Knowles), East District Superintendent (Rev. Moonyoung Lee), and the Order of Elders of California-Pacific Conference for their approvals and blessings for this much needed spiritual journey that will help me to renew, recharge, and refresh.

During this three months I will be on a self-disciplined spiritual retreat that includes online classes, intensive reading, spiritual reflections, and self-care. My main focus of the study areas includes John Wesley's "Quadrilateral (Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience)," "Happiness," and "World Religion."

Please rest assured that during my absence the congregation will be blessed by wonderful sermons and messages from a series of guest preachers and speakers over the 13 weeks, from people within the congregation and guests. Consider this time to be a special congregational spiritual renewal time as well - as you ponder the variety of messages given by wonderful spiritual leaders.

If you need pastoral care, please contact the church office at (951) 683-7831. You will be guided by our wonderful office staff, Rev. Bev Devine, or Becky Ruiz. If the need is urgent and the office is closed, contact Lay Leader Kris Lovekin at (951) 534-4376, and she will connect you with one of our retired UMC clergy members within our congregation or another UMC pastor, if necessary.

Please pray for me and I will keep you all in my heart and prayers until I see you in April 2024. May God's peace, joy, and strength be upon you all!

Love and Blessings,

The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor



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Empty Nester's Potluck



Our church organizes lots of fun, family events, but we would also like to invest in the part of our community where there are no children in the home.

We are calling it "Empty Nester's Potluck" and inviting all our church congregation to a casserole potluck at 5 pm Saturday, Jan. 27 to help us kick off our first get together! We will also be inviting the community's "Empty Nest" population.

You have all been so supportive of our other Outreach Events and would like your commitment to come for three months, Jan. 27, Feb. 24 and March 30 with a casserole to each potluck at which point we will evaluate if this is a worthy way to build community fellowship and grow our church. -- Lee Ann Salmon

News Briefs

Eat at Pier 76 on Jan. 17

First UMC has designated Jan. 17 as a fundraising night at Pier 76, a seafood restaurant at the Riverside Plaza.

The hours are 12 noon to 8 pm and 18 percent of your bill will come back to the missions fund of the church. Show your proof of the fundraiser to the cashier. We will send this out via email and we will have it in the narthex too.

Exploring Solar Power

A committee will seek out expertise in solar energy in an attempt to save money on utilities by installing solar panels on the church property.

Trustees have authorized the exploration. We will report back to the congregation about what we find out and how we can proceed to care for God's creation.

BELONGING & INCLUSION



All belong and will be loved in The UMC. All will be heard, respected and engaged. All will be free to develop their personal relationship with God and to serve fully in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

We are diverse, justice-seeking, resilient, welcoming people of God.

Gifts and Graces

By David Fraser,
Chair of the Finance
Committee



Sweet Treats for the Church Budget

Epiphany, which begins on Jan. 6, is the time when the church recalls the gifts of the Kings to the baby Jesus. What better time to emulate the royal gifts with some thoughtful giving toward the church.

Many of you have already supported our See's Candy fundraiser. About half of the cost goes back to fund church priorities.

This year will be a most challenging year financially for our church. Utility costs and insurance costs continue to rise, yet we know we must continue to be a church that wins people for Christ.

You can play your part by pledging and by giving generously. If you've already pledged but can increase your pledge, or if you want to start pledging now, please let our Office and Finance Manager Becky Ruiz know. She is available by phone at (951) 683-7831 or by email at r Ruiz@firstchurchriverside.org. Lastly, if you would like to volunteer your time to help at any of the fundraising efforts being planned by our dedicated finance committee, please contact me at stephenministry@firstchurchriverside.org.



Yum! See's Candy!

Pancakes, Bacon to Boost the Budget of the Preschool



Flapjacks for FUMPS!
Jan. 27 8-11am



Join us for breakfast to celebrate the First United Methodist Church Preschool, 4845 Brockton Ave., Riverside. Cost is \$10 per person or \$30 per family. Call (951) 683-4500 to reserve a spot.



The next fundraiser for our preschool is a big pancake breakfast for all supporters of our First United Methodist Preschool, commonly called "FUMPS."

We will welcome people into the Fellowship Hall from 8 to 11 am Saturday, Jan. 27 for pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage and bacon, coffee and juice, all cooked by David Fraser and his crew.

The suggested donation is \$5 per plate or \$20 for a family and we have room to feed all your neighbors and friends. This is a really great price!

Come socialize with young families from our preschool. Reserve a space at (951) 683-4500 to help us plan. But bring your generous donation to the door.



The Gift Fair Expands the Good in the World

By Kris Lovekin

Money raised for good causes:

- Ten Thousand Villages: \$2,900
- UWF FUMCOR: \$2,503
- Heifer: \$1,627
- Pencils and Dreams: \$1,247
- Path of Life (paper flowers): \$620
- Wesley United Women in Faith \$ 265
- Feel Better Friends: \$380
- Soroptimist International: \$250.
- Riverside Christian Assembly winter camp project: \$247
- Inland Communities Fellowship of Reconciliation \$210
- Neuro Diversity Center at CSUSB (body butters) \$200
- Symphonie Jeunesse Orchestra (baskets and silver) \$50

Hundreds of people shopped for crafts at the 2023 Alternative Gift Fair, and at the same time they boosted the good works in the world. It is a win win.

Lisa Laird, president of FUMCOR's United Women in Faith, said their booth raised \$2,503 and all of it will go to a variety of missions, including Project Hope, Family Promise, Feeding America, disaster relief around the world and missionaries. (See the full list on the UWF page.)

Rebecca Waring Crane, a Riverside artist who coordinated the making of ceramic bowls and spoons, sent \$1,331 to support the Alvord Cares project of the Alvord Unified School District, a fund that helps children in need. She learned that in Riverside, 60 to 70% of elementary students qualify for free lunch, which is a surprisingly high number. Her goal is to continue raising money for the cause with socially engaged art that brings more awareness to the issue. Her art installation contained 500 ceramic spoons.

Martha Burns raised \$380 for Feel Better Friends, a non profit that sends yarn creations to sick children. Often the dolls look like the children themselves, with medical equipment or scars knit right in. Martha created more general creations for the fair, and they were quite popular.

The Inlandia Institute raised \$270 in sales for their own books to support literary activities in the Inland region. About the same amount went to the authors directly.

Inland Communities Fellowship of Reconciliation made \$210 at their booth selling books donated by local women and women's groups. Those that were left were donated to Friends of the Library, Civil Rights Institute, and St. George's Episcopal Church. They will use the money to put on a Peace event in September.

The weather, the soup and the music made the event especially festive this year. Thanks to all the volunteers.

Youth and Families

We've had many new families attend our outreach events and several have expressed interest in our church. While this is great, the question is how do we get them to join us? The best incentive is a personal invitation and the offer of a ride. Check in with them. It's math. Each one, bring one, to double our attendance. Make it a New Year's resolution!



Circle Up

Our United Methodist Youth U.P.L.I.F.T Fellowship is for youth in 5th through 12th grades, and family members and friends are welcome.

We are meeting upstairs in the youth room from 5:30 to 7 pm on Wednesdays - Jan. 3 and 17.

RSVP to Christina Graves so we make sure we have plenty of snacks!

A Morning Out

Quality childcare is available during Parents Morning Out, which operates from 9 am to 12 noon on Wednesdays when FUMPS (First United Methodist Preschool) is in session. Do you have a neighbor or a friend who could benefit?

Contact Christina Graves at childrensdirector@firstchurchriverside.org or the church office at 951-683-7831.



December Highlights

Santa's Workshop, Live Nativity



Follow the Star!

We followed the star of Christmas love and found gift givers, angels, bells, shepherds, hot cocoa, cookies and fellowship. Thanks to all the organizers and all the volunteers!



At Living Nativity, the angels declared Glory to the Lord. Liz, Lewis and baby Louie were this year's holy family.



Above, Bob Bahnson and Bill Ashworth at the first of three services on Dec. 24.

Right: Santa's Workshop volunteers helped families with children visit with Santa, play games and decorate cookies.



United Methodist Men

Jan. 14



December's Lunch Featured David Leonard with a Bayonet

Along with a delicious lunch, the United Methodist Men's Dec. 10 meeting featured new church member David Leonard in full Revolutionary war uniform. He explained the purpose of each piece of the uniform and said it is often time-intensive to find out if ancestors contributed to the success of the Revolutionary war. Dave is an active member of the Riverside chapter of "The Sons of the American Revolution."

Jeff Ashworth led our Christmas singing.

The January 14 meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall starting at 11:30 am, with a great lunch provided by Dave Fraser. The cost of the lunch is \$ 6 / person or \$ 15 / family.

The UMM Prayer Breakfast meetings continue at 7 am on Friday morning's in Mary's Kitchen at the church. Typically the fare includes pastries or donuts plus coffee. All men are welcome.



Above, David Leonard and Pastor Kim.
Below, Lyn Knowles learns more about
Revolutionary war weaponry.





United
Women
in Faith

Thanks for Your Missions Support

Due to your prayers and ongoing support, the United Women in Faith met our commitments and donated \$4,500 as our end-of-the-year giving:

- Pledge to Mission East District UWF \$500
- Alternatives to Domestic Violence \$200
- Feeding America \$500
- Path of Life Ministries \$250
- Safe House \$100
- Salvation Army \$500
- Friends of Padhar School \$200 (fees for a girl at Padhar School in India)
- Family Promise (Magnolia Presbyterian Church) \$500
- Million Kids (Opal Singleton) \$250
- Project Hope (Wesley UMW) \$500
- Global Missionary Fund \$500
- UMCOR \$500

We are grateful for all you do to help us improve the lives of women, children, and youth around the world. Rest assured strong, capable women will raise and support strong, caring, capable sons and daughters. Love and caring will manifest itself tenfold with the blessings God has provided us. If you have any questions regarding UWif/UMW please feel free to contact me or another member.

May you have a blessed and joyous New Year!

Cindy Qualtieri
FUMCOR Unit President
cindyqualtieri2@gmail.com



Officers for the new year of United Women in Faith include from back row left: Becki Brawner; Patti Gardenias; Lisa Laird, Donna Woodard, Lyn Knowles, Cindy Qualtieri, Kathy Calloway and Pam Conlin. Front row: Shirley Parks, Lyn Knowles and Margaret Berger.

Meetings

Jan. 3- Executive Committee 1 pm via Zoom.

Jan. 4- Tri Church Bible Study 6:45 pm

Jan. 17- UMW/UWif 10 am in Chandler Lounge
Pledge and Remembrance Service

Jan. 23- Citrus Circle 7 pm via Zoom

Jan. 27- Serendipity Circle (crafts and pancakes?)

For more information contact:
Lyn Knowles 951-737-3541

Prayers & Praises

Joys and Concerns

Please be in prayer for the prayer requests of the congregation.

Jim Sizer, Norma Nelson, Bill McInroe,
Mack and Elizabeth Davis, Lisa Thomas,
Pat Williams, Rebecca Slaughter, Jim Ashworth,
Lolita Manacop, Mary Herrmann,
Pastor Kim for his studies, our families,
our neighbors, our country, our world



As we enter into a new year of
Christian discipleship,
unify this body of faithful persons,
that we may recommit to the service of
others and to the healing of
the communities we call home.
Infuse us with your Spirit,
that we may give praise in all
circumstances, and find blessings
in the midst of challenge.
Bless us with an indomitable hope—
a hope that transforms
even our darkest despair.

Amen.

—Anna Crews Camphouse

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Please join with us in giving thanks for the birthdays and anniversaries in our congregation.

January Anniversaries

15 Bob Schiffer and Lisa Thomas
25 Ron and Lee Bayer

January Birthdays

1 Nick Lovekin
3 Julie Williams
3 Benita Roberts
4 Cheryl Riggs
4 Norikim Chavez
5 Teiapa'a Tupou
7 John Paul McDonald
8 Dylan Grimes
10 Joy Arguelles
11 Bradley Tomlinson
11 Deirdre Kirkwood
12 Jaswant Roberts
16 Teresa Clark
17 Patricia Ream
19 Lolita Manacop
20 Mack Davis
21 Kate Lovekin
25 Beulah Leake
28 Susan Exon
28 Rebecca Slaughter
29 Keith Miller
30 Evie Fletcher
31 Kyle Weakly



Christina Graves and her daughter,
Corinne, lit the Advent candles on
Christmas Eve morning.



*Let peace
begin with
me!*

Highlighted Events

Jan. 10: Parents Morning Out (Nursery) – 9 am

Jan. 10: U.P.L.I.F.T. (Youth Room) – 5:30 pm

Jan. 14: UMM Lunch – 11:30 am

Jan. 17: Pier 76 Fundraiser

Jan. 27: Flapjacks for FUMPS – 8 to 11 am

Jan. 27: Empty Nester's Potluck – 5 pm

Ongoing Events

- Sunday Worship: 10 am
- First Sundays-Holy Communion
- Sunday School for Children: 10:15 am
- Second Sunday – Men's Program/Lunch after church.
- Bell choir rehearsal: Tuesdays, 7 pm
- Adult choir rehearsal: Thursdays, 7 pm



The Aldersgate Chorale sang "Behold the Star" in December and Phil Bremenstuhl's lights made Rev. Bev look like she had antennae.

Need to Reach Us?

First United Methodist Church of Riverside
4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside, CA 92506
(951) 683-7831 (Mon to Fri 10 am to 2 pm)
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Church Staff

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First United

Methodist Church of Riverside