

# The Messenger

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

## Love Frees Us All

Dear First Church Family and Friends:

*"God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them."* -- 1 John 4:15-16



Dear Church Family and Friends:  
Happy September to you all!

Thank you all for having prayed for my healing, recovery, and strength when I was sick recently with COVID-19. Along with my family, I am now completely well, after being tested negative two days in a row.

While I was staying home with COVID that week, I watched the 2024 DNC in Chicago, and many, many political speeches. On Day 3, one young speaker, a 26-year-old African American woman, caught my special attention with a poem. Her name is Amanda Gorman who emphasized in her short speech, "While we all love freedom, it is love that frees us all."

What an inspiring, bold, and prophetic voice from young America! I believe that her profound message resonates with all of us. Yes, as we learn in John 4:18, it is indeed "love" that not only conquers all odds but also casts out all fears.

Being the ultimate Joy, Jesus came to the world. He loved us first and taught us how to love, and his last and greatest commandment was to love one another. Jesus is still dwelling among us as "Immanuel (God with Us)." His sacrificial love continues to empower us so that we can transform the world with his unconditional love that frees us all regardless of who we are.

Therefore, this month, September, I would like to highlight the following three things that can help us to experience this "love" as we are entering into a "Back-To-Church" mode:

(1) September 4 (Wednesday): The Bible is the foundation of our faith. Our Wednesday Bible Study (via Zoom) will resume at 7 p.m. An email has been sent out to you with more detailed information, including a zoom link. If you have not received this email, please notify the church office.

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# Love frees us all...

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(2) Sept. 8 (Sunday): Praising God's name in our worship is one of the highest expressions of our love for God. We are happy to have The Aldersgate Chorale back in Sunday Worship after a 2-month summer break. Welcome back, Choir, we've missed you!

(3) Sept. 22 (Sunday): With God's help, we can grow and thrive together while bearing many fruits! During this New Members Welcoming Sunday Worship, we will welcome our new siblings in Christ into our congregation! It's never too late for you to join the church, if you have not done so yet. Simply contact the church office or me: 951-683-7831 or [pastorjtkim@firstchurchriverside.org](mailto:pastorjtkim@firstchurchriverside.org)

My sermon series, "Live Your Happy Life Today," will be concluded on Sept. 22 with Part 11 of 11. It will be a truly special day for me and for the congregation to welcome our new church family members and to give thanks to God for granting us one of the happiest celebrations together! Please be well and flourish!

Love and Blessings,  
The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

## Get Ready for a Potluck!



Faith and Fellowship will host an appetizer potluck in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, Sept. 15. Please bring your favorite appetizer and enjoy coffee and refreshments as we talk about our lives and the life of the church at First UMC of Riverside. This potluck is open to all.

## Volunteer Opportunities



## Help the World See

We just delivered another 38 pairs of glasses to the Lions Club. The Lions Club cleans and classifies the glasses by prescription and then distributes them to children and adults in developing nations.

That makes 277 pairs of glasses our church has contributed since 2016. It's easy to donate your used glasses. There is a box in the narthex to donate your used prescription pill bottles. The donated glasses go into the same box. Please donate your used prescription glasses, sunglasses and reading glasses (and if possible, the glasses case). -- Lyn Knowles

## Brainstorm with Outreach

The Outreach Committee will meet after church on Sunday, Sept. 15 in the Chandler Lounge (after the appetizer potluck). If you've never attended an outreach meeting and you have some ideas you think would work to draw new members, come share your ideas. We will start with a document called 101 Outreach Ideas. Contact Lyn Knowles for a copy. Join us, and let's plan some fun times.

## Volunteer to Bring a Meal

Our Family Promise of Riverside families have moved into Calvary Presbyterian Church quarters, but they still need meals each evening. They are using a Sign Up Genius list online. <https://tinyurl.com/6358bw2c>

## We Need Ushers!

Here's a way to serve the church: help us greet people on a Sunday morning and track who is here. We have a tool called Breeze to make it easier and we will teach you how to use it.



# Preschool has New Director

The First United Methodist Preschool has a new director, Lisa Skiver, who is stepping up after a long career teaching in early childhood development programs.

She has worked at Temple Beth El in Riverside and UCR's Children Development Center. She found her way to FUMPS when she enrolled her oldest son in the preschool program. She became a substitute teacher and landed a lead teacher position the following year with the Busy Bees and the Little Rascals.

"When the director position opened up, it seemed only natural that Mrs. Skiver would lead the great team here at FUMPS," said Karen Wilson, who recently retired from the job.

Lisa Skiver lives in Riverside with her husband of 28 years. Her two sons, Ryan and Jacob, are now grown and thriving in their own careers. She has a granddaughter and she said "Nana" might be her favorite title.

She said she is excited to move from her single classroom to leading the entire campus - which she now calls "her bigger classroom." She loves the students and families she has met at FUMPS and is proud of the impact this school has had on the entire Riverside community since it opened in 1947. She looks forward to continuing long-standing traditions as well as creating new ways of doing things.

"This preschool became our second home," she said. "I am looking forward to this next chapter here at FUMPS with my outstanding families and dedicated staff."

## Like Early Christmas Shopping?

FUMCOR will again be shopping for families who need extra help on Christmas in a partnership with Wesley UMC's Hope Room. We will be asking for donations early this year to provide for 65 families who will be selected for the project.

In fact, Lee Ann Salmon wants to get going in September and she will put a canister in the narthex.

We will find out name and wishes on Nov. 8 but already you can be thinking and buying gift cards.

The big gift giveaway will be Dec. 16 at Wesley.

"Last year we started shopping so late that the most popular items were sold out," Lee Ann said. "We are getting ready early this year."

You can make a cash donation, or we can use \$25 Target, Walmart or Amazon gift cards to shop with or give to the older youths.

Thanks for making the holiday extra special for so many children. If you have questions, call Lee Ann 951 906-6452

The preschool loves donations. Some ideas include:

- goldfish
- apple sauce
- carrots and ranch
- string cheese and juice
- copy paper
- dry erase markers
- construction paper
- soft soap refill
- baby wipes
- sidewalk chalk



# Gifts and Graces

Funding our Mission

By David Fraser, Chair of Finance



## Giving is Up -- Thank You!

What GOOD NEWS! Our 52 pledging church members along with non-pledging church members, and others have given more in the first six months of 2024 than was given in same period in 2023. And, even with increased expenses in 2024, our income has so far exceeded our expenses. Along with pledged and unpledged giving, facilities income so far has been a surprise and exceeded our expectations. We used the remainder of our Employee Retention Tax Credit in the first five months of 2024 (shown under "Other" income below along with other sources) and that, combined with other income, meant that we have not had to dip into our trust accounts yet. We are in good shape thanks to our members' generosity and good planning by the Board of Trustees, Finance Committee and staff.

Here is a summary of income and expenses as of the end of June 2024.

FUMCOR Income/Expenses June 30, 2023 vs June 30, 2024		
	YTD June 2023	YTD June 2024
<b>Income</b>		
Pledges/Unpledged	\$189,996.00	\$192,475.00
Fundraising	1,499.00	1,915.00
Plate Offerings	1,937.00	2,391.00
Facilities	50,353.00	52,231.00
Other	53,142.00	82,844.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$296,927.00</b>	<b>\$331,856.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Property and Maintenance	\$61,553.00	\$63,183.00
Office and Admin	17,339.00	12,532.00
Other Expenses (Salaries, Support Staff, Independent Contractors, Missions, Music, Worship, etc)	\$232,688.00	\$240,138.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$311,580.00</b>	<b>\$315,853.00</b>
<b>Income/Expenses</b>	<b>\$(14,653.00)</b>	<b>\$16,003.00</b>



Reminder to  
ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND  
LEADERS OF THE CHURCH  
budget requests are due to  
Becky Ruiz, financial manager,  
by Sept. 5.  
[rruiz@firstchurchriverside.org](mailto:rruiz@firstchurchriverside.org)

After our stewardship drive, we will prepare our budget for 2025. Many challenges confront us. We have struggled every year to cut expenses and this year we may be forced make more drastic cuts unless our pledges and giving are stronger than ever. I am hopeful that this year's stewardship campaign will bring in more pledging members and will invigorate everyone to commit time, energy and money to our church and its missions. If our members step up and commit, as they have done in the past few years, we will make it!


# Children, Youth and Families



Loving God, watch over our children as they begin their new school year. Bless them with joy at seeing friends, excitement at new experiences, and a love of learning.

Guide and protect all who learn, replacing fear with joy, anxiety with peace, and tiredness with energy. Give wisdom, patience, and joy to teachers as they serve their students.

In Jesus' name we pray.  
Amen.



**A BACK-TO-SCHOOL PRAYER**

**U.P.L.I.F.T. for Youth!**

All school-age kids and their friends are invited to meet for dinner, friendship, and fun in the Youth Room!

**Now on Sundays!**  
**Sept. 8 and 22**  
**5 pm to 6:30 pm**



**Parents' Morning Out**

**Wednesdays 9 am to noon**

We're extending this to our preschool families and other parents who would like to take a break while we care for their children (18 months to five years.) The cost is \$25 per child, plus \$10 more for a sibling. Parents must register in advance at the QR code. Questions?



## Acolytes Needed

We are always looking for youth and adults to serve as acolytes (candle lighters) on Sunday mornings.

You are invited to carry the Light of Christ into our worship space and then, back down the aisle to light the way, taking the light out into our world!

Contact Christina Graves  
951-683-7831  
childrensdirectore@firstchurchriverside.org



## Empty Nesters Set for Sept. 21

Several months ago, Empty Nesters played "Name That Tune" with Pop music from various decades. Greg Laird won that contest with his amazing memory of pop and country tunes. Can he do it again, this time with timeless music from the church? Find out this month, when Empty Nesters plays "Name That Tune, Hymnal Version."

Robert Phillips will play a selection of church hymns (or at least the beginnings of those hymns). Can you name the hymn? Can you correctly recite the opening verse? Who will win this month's challenge?

Find out at Empty Nesters, Saturday, Sept. 21. It's a potluck, so bring your favorite dish to share and join us in the Fellowship Hall at 5 pm. -- Lyn Knowles

## Choir Begins Sept. 5

The Aldersgate Chorale has had a two month break, and will begin again this month. We welcome new members! No audition is necessary. Rehearsals begin 7 pm Thursday, Sept. 5. We will begin singing for our worship services on Sept. 8. On Sundays, we meet at 9:15am for our Sunday warm-up session.

If you, or anyone you know, would like to join us, we would love to have you! Please arrive at 6:45 pm for our rehearsal. That will give me time to assign music to you and figure out where you will be seated.

We look forward to working together as one body in Christ! --Yvonne Flagg, Choir Director

## Ring the Bells!

Join the adult bell choir starting on Tuesday, Sept. 3. You will join a fun, supportive group learning music for Sunday Services.

We also have a youth bell choir that rehearses on Sunday mornings.

No previous music experience is required. For more information or to sign up, contact Gayla Lonsbery at [Belldirector@firstchurchriverside.org](mailto:Belldirector@firstchurchriverside.org)



PRAISE

# United Methodist Men

Sunday, September 8

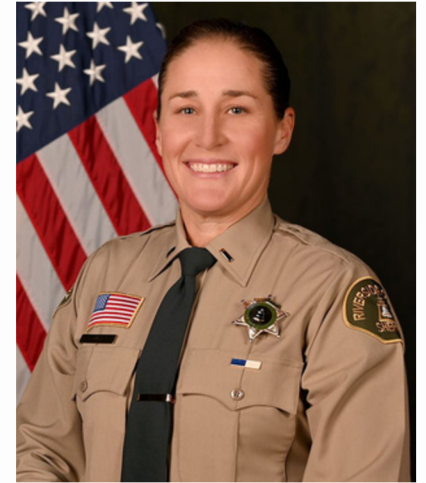


## A Sheriff in Horse Town USA

For the next lunch meeting of the United Methodist Men on Sunday, Sept. 8, the speaker will be Lt. Jessica Hall, the daughter-in-law of Daryl and Lee Ann Salmon. She is chief of the Norco Station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Office. She will speak about her journey through the ranks to become a station commander. She will also touch on the types of criminal activity that dominate the region and how we can stay diligent to protect ourselves.

These lunch meetings are open to the entire congregation, and we hope you will join us for a great program, meal, and fellowship. Cost is \$6, or \$15 per family.

The United Methodist Men are continuing the weekly Prayer Breakfast, from 7 to 8 am each Friday in Mary's Kitchen. We share fellowship, faith, coffee, donuts, and pastries. All men are invited to join!



Jessica Hall

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## We Will Open the Doors on Oct. 5

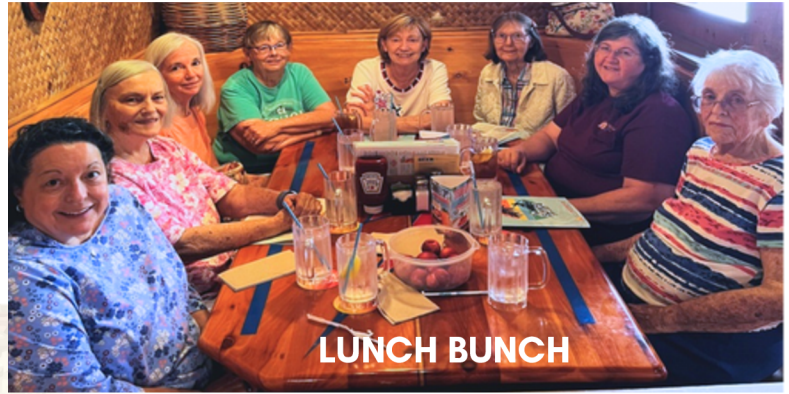
The City of Riverside sponsors an annual event that allows people to tour historic places in the city, and this year our sanctuary is on the list. Tours will be 2 to 7 pm Saturday, Oct. 5.

Visitors will hear the organ, get a peek at the stained-glass windows and learn about upcoming events and opportunities, like the Halloween Hop and the Halloween organ concert. Our friendly greeters include LeeAnn Salmon, Robert Phillips, Mike Alfred, Kris Lovekin, Rev. Bev Devine.





# United Women in Faith



## Lunch Bunch

September 12 11:30am

at MONARK ASIAN BISTRO  
in Canyon Crest Towne Center  
(near Ralph's)

### Hand Crafters

It is time to start thinking about the Alternative Gift Fair.  
The UWF will, of course, have a table at the Fair.

Do you have some handcrafted items you would like to  
donate to us for sale?

All profits will go to our missions giving.

Pam Conlin 951-237-5470 or

Lisa Laird 951-237-7112



### Conflict in the Holy Land

-SEPTEMBER TRI-CHURCH BIBLE STUDY invites all Church members & Friends to hear Cheryl Riggs PhD Professor Emerita History speak to us on the Thursday evenings of September 5th and 12th at 7 pm via Zoom. RSVP for your Zoom invite right away. Lyn Knowles, [daselwonk@aol.com](mailto:daselwonk@aol.com) /Karen Eagans [kkeagans@aol.com](mailto:kkeagans@aol.com)

### Wrestling with Doubt and Finding Faith

-WEEKLY TRI-CHURCH BIBLE STUDY will resume on October 10th and continue through November 21. We meet via Zoom at 6:45pm. We will not meet on Halloween. Our book is "Wrestling with Doubt and Finding Faith" by Adam Hamilton.

If you have not attended our Bible Study before contact Lyn Knowles at 951-737-3541.



# Prayers & Praises

## We pray for...

Peggy Haught, Jennifer Mahl, Norma Nelson, Mary Herrmann, Michael Thompson, Jim Ashworth, Linda Rydzik, Lou Santino, Mary Boon, Melva Cooke, Judy McArthur, John and Susan Page-Logger, Robert and Benita Roberts, Carol Erdman, LJ Arguelles, Yvonne Peters, Mack Davis and family



Welcome!!!

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

### September Anniversaries

- 3 Robert and Linda Hice
- 7 Ron and Dianne Purkey
- 9 Dan and Gayla Lonsbery
- 13 Jennifer and Eric Mahl
- 16 John and Katrina Zeeb
- 17 Jonathon and Melissa Williams
- 22 Matt Gorder and Anita Kramer
- 22 Jim and Pam Conlin

### September Birthdays

- 1 Michael Othon
- 7 Harmoni Green
- 8 Carli Renteria
- 9 Bob Nelson
- 9 Dianne Purkey
- 10 John Zeeb
- 11 Alissa Ashworth
- 21 Scott Kirkwood
- 22 Billy Gwira
- 23 Gretel Noble
- 23 Joyce Brown
- 24 David Rajaratnam
- 27 Marie Madden

### *Pastor Kim's Wednesday Bible Study*

- Sept. 4, 7 pm (Day 247: Matthew 7:1-8:34)
- Sept. 11, 7 pm (Day 254: Matthew 21:1-46)
- Sept. 18, 7 pm (Day 261: Mark 6:1-56)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86464841866pwd=ADihpsNIDjB8ZE7gEbOYHKLyubVd9T.1>



## We Welcome New Members Sunday, Sept. 22

### **REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH:**

Amanda "Mandy" Johnson Bottrell  
Carol Cipra  
Nan Friedley  
Billy Gwira  
Char Nicanor Kimball  
Julita Nicanor

### **TRANSFER:**

David Weise (from Hemet UMC)

To learn more about the meaning and process of becoming a member. Please contact Pastor Kim at [pastorjtkim@firstchurch.org](mailto:pastorjtkim@firstchurch.org)

[FirstChurchRiverside.org](http://FirstChurchRiverside.org)

## *Celebration of Life in memory of*

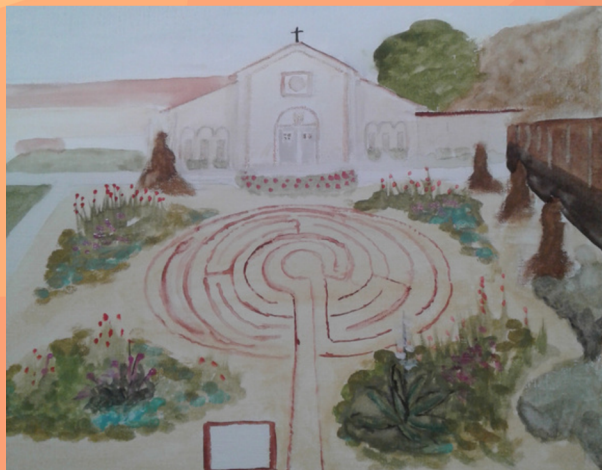
*Elizabeth Davis*

11:45 am September 5, 2024

COLUMBARIUM WITNESS SERVICE

Riverside National Cemetery  
22495 Van Buren Blvd. Riverside, CA 92518

Condolences may be sent to: Mack Davis and family  
1110 Via Vista Dr., Riverside, CA 92506-5309



# *A Woman for All Seasons: Sophie Weiss*

By David Fraser, Chair of the Finance Committee

You've seen Sophie Weiss helping take the collection on Sunday mornings and working the dishwasher after Lenten Soup Suppers and United Methodist Men's lunches. Did you know that Sophie is also on the Board of Trustees and serves on the Church and Society Committee?

Sophie is always ready and willing to help. Super intelligent, engaging, ebullient and quick to laugh, dedicated, always willing to help and multi-talented - Sophie is a woman for all seasons.

Sophie came to FUMCOR with her mom, Kate Hunter, from Escondido and joined the church in 2013. Her mom is now a pastor in the Cal-Pac UMC Conference.

Sophie was active in the youth program through high school. She got her associates degree at Cottey College, out-of-state, which meant we only saw her occasionally at Christmas and during summer breaks. But in 2021 she returned to Riverside after completing her bachelor's degree in Physics at Coe College in Iowa, and began a doctoral program at UC Riverside. She's now in her fourth year of a Ph.D. program in Material Science and Engineering. Sophie still has dreams of a career in teaching that employs her love of Physics. By the way, she also did a research internship at Brown University, an Ivy League college.

Sophie has many interests and talents. She will be going back to Italy this September for a second art seminar in portrait painting after completing one in figure painting a year ago. When Church and Society began exploring how the church could save money on water and landscaping and also be more ecologically responsible, Sophie offered her artistic talent. She did a

concept painting of the church grounds showing how waterwise landscaping could transform our campus. That drawing may still galvanize the church to further action on this issue.

The demands of a doctoral program haven't kept Sophie away from church. While in the youth program at FUMCOR Sophie began giving back. She washed dishes and volunteered to help at many events. She continues to help out in the kitchen whenever she can.

When Brian Tomlinson, Chair of the Board of Trustees approached Sophie to consider becoming a trustee, it did not take much convincing. Sophie appreciates how much she's learned about the inner workings of the church and what it takes to keep our church buildings and grounds well maintained. She has enjoyed learning about the complexities of our finances. And, she has been engaged in exploring bringing solar energy and ecological landscaping renovations to our campus.

Sophie is a woman of science with a passion for Physics. Has this challenged her faith? Sophie says she has been surrounded by people of faith in both her undergraduate work and while working on her doctorate. Hindi's, Muslims, Jews, and Christians have been peers, professors, and mentors. She says that knowledge is not a hinderance to faith. Rather knowing brings you to a more expansive understanding of our world, the nature of its being, and a deeper appreciation of its creator and sustainer. For Sophie, the fundamental aspect of faith is how we interact with one another. Her interactions with everyone she meets testifies to her faith - warm, caring, spirited and joyous.



# Creation Care is Our Call

By Mary L. Herrmann, Stewardship Chair

God created the Earth, filled it with natural wonders and charged humankind with its stewardship. It is our responsibility to cherish and preserve this magnificent gift from God.

Caring for the Creation is a high priority for the United Methodist Church. At the Cal-Pac Annual in June we resolved to be good Stewards of Creation, including fighting for cleaner sources of energy to slow climate change and the fires, storms and droughts it brings.

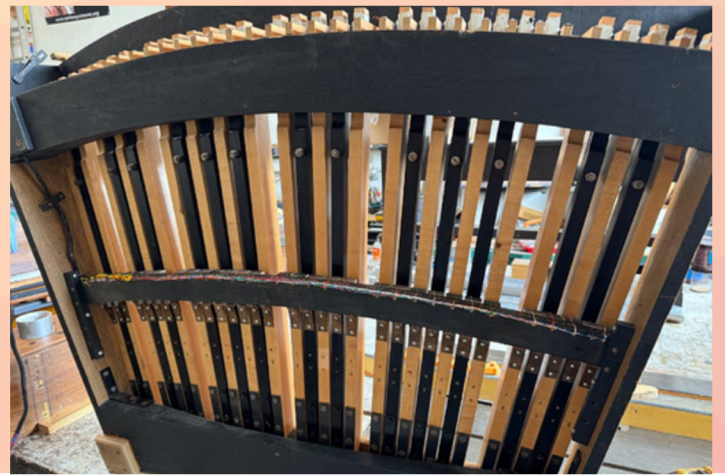
FUMCOR is faithfully answering God's call to action. For instance:

- All chandelier lights in the sanctuary have been converted to energy efficient LED lights
- Long florescent tube lights are being replaced with LEDs as they burn out;
- We recycle cans, paper, cardboard and certain plastics.
- Trustees are researching how to go solar, with proposals received from three companies. This will be an expensive upfront capital expenditure, but with utility savings down the line to recoup the costs.
- Church investments support one fossil fuel company, but that could be reevaluated.

Now, turning to you. Have you thought about changing how you care for our magnificent planet? Here are a few ideas:

- Buy fewer things. Shop at thrift stores or participate in Buy Nothing groups online.
- Carpool when you can, or walk or bike.
- Change to Energy Star LEDs for all your light bulbs
- Buy appliances that are Energy Star. As you upgrade a car or an HVAC system think about the greenest technologies.
- Too hot? Install a ceiling fan or a whole house fan.
- Plant trees for shade and because they are the most efficient way to pull carbon from the atmosphere.
- Wash clothes in cold water and use the sun to dry your laundry.
- Compost your kitchen waste, or follow trash barrel waste guidelines.
- Lobby your government for greener policies. Make sure you are an educated voter.

Our actions are a reflection of faith. Recognize that Creation Care is an integral part of our Christian faith. God bless you. Thank you for your ongoing support of FUMCOR, of its ministry and missions.



# Your Organ Donations at Work!

By Robert Phillips, organist

Thanks to your generous contributions to the Organ Dedicated Fund, our organ technician, Sean O'Neal, and his crew have undertaken major repairs of our magnificent instrument. On July 25, he carted the pedalboard off to Seal Beach for a complete refurbishment, including replacement of all the contacts, which, like many things that are 67 years old, were failing with annoying regularity.

Back in the sanctuary, Sean redid all the pedal wiring in the console, allowing plenty of slack so that the pedals can now be pulled out and worked on without cutting the wires. At the top of this article you can see the console in see-thru mode and with its base dismantled, and the pedal array with its spiffy new contacts in Sean's workshop. It's terrific to be able to play any pedal and hear a sturdy, solid tone, rather than pathetic sputtering or nothing at all.

Of the organ's three keyboards, the middle one is the "Great" manual. The stops assigned to it provide the foundation for accompanying congregational singing and are among the loudest on the instrument. The "Great" pipes sit atop two wind chests. Directly beneath each pipe is a leather pouch mounted on a pouch rail, a wooden strip with holes in it. Most of the "Great" pipes have original leather from 1957, and the dry, brittle cowhide is flaking and failing with frightful frequency, having long surpassed its normal lifespan.

Replacing the leather is a precise and painstaking process. Sean suggested that we re-leather the two "Great" chests separately, so that half the stops will be usable while the other half are in his shop for two weeks.

On August 21, Sean and his crew removed all the pipes from the first wind chest and took the pouch rails

to his shop. The long-awaited "Great Releathering" has begun!

Of course, all of this work will make a substantial dent in our Organ Dedicated Fund, so it's time for another concert! Mark your calendars for 7 pm Saturday, Oct. 26, when we will present our annual Halloween organ spectacular. There's no title or theme yet, but I'm practicing some new pieces, including a gigantic and grandly gothic toccata requested by one of our church members. It should be a fun evening, and if the mood strikes you, wear a costume! October's Messenger will contain further details.



# Events to Remember

- Labor Day is Sept. 2, Church campus is closed
- Sunday Worship: 10 am
- Sunday School, Children (weekly): 10:15 am
- Sunday School, Youth (2nd & 4th Sundays): 10:15 am
- First Sundays-Holy Communion
- Third Sundays - Response Band leads Worship
- Third Sundays - Faith and Fellowship Events
- Aldersgate Chorale rehearsal 7 pm Thursdays
- Bell Choir rehearsal 7 pm Tuesdays
- The Response rehearsal, Wednesdays, 6:30 pm
- Men's Friday Prayer Breakfasts 7 am
- Empty Nesters 5 pm Sept. 21
- The Habit fundraiser Sept. 22

## So Long Summer...

Volunteers made sure our Bye Bye Summer Bash went well, inviting families from the neighborhood to come for water games, facepainting, free school supplies and crafts on July 27. Thanks to Lyn Knowles, Lee Ann Salmon, and Lucinda Edmunds for leadership and of course all the volunteers.



## Need to Reach Us?

First United Methodist Church of Riverside  
4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside, CA 92506  
(951) 683-7831 (Mon to Fri 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)  
secretary@firstchurchriverside.org

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First United

Methodist Church of Riverside