

OCTOBER 2026

The Messenger

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

Bearing Fruit!

*"You did not choose me, but I chose you.
And I appointed you to go and bear fruit,
fruit that will last..." (John 15:16, NRSVue)*



Greetings Church Family,

On Oct. 3 (10 am - noon), FUMCOR will offer a "Blessing of the Animals" outreach event for community and church members, in conjunction with the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, who is known the world over as the saint who loved small animals, preached to the birds, and tamed the feared wolf of Gubbio.

St. Francis of Assisi embodied hospitality in his ministry and cared for all of creation. His life's mission included radical hospitality in realizing and meeting the needs of strangers, providing care for lepers, and welcoming and feeding the needy. As he preached the Gospel on his travels, he embodied an openness, a hospitality, that became part of his life and legacy. Hospitality was more than a way of life for St. Francis; it was knit into the fabric of his being.

All Christians are called to be hospitable. The Finance Committee hopes you will continue in 2027 to support the operations and missions of FUMCOR with a generous pledge of financial support, and a strong commitment to actively volunteer your time and talents, so we can continue to efficiently operate and offer hospitality to all, and "make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." Please join us on Stewardship Sunday, Oct. 11, for Pastor Kim's Stewardship Sermon, and on Commitment Sunday, Oct. 25, to return your Pledge Card/Form. Or you can return your pledge by any method -- electronically, U.S. Mail, or drop it into the offering plate on any Sunday morning.

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First United
Methodist Church
of Riverside

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We also ask for your commitment to actively join and participate in church committees, as a chair and/or member. FUMCOR is operated by its committees; they are vital to ensure the business and fellowship of the church run smoothly, and its ministry and discipleship reach out to the community. Your commitment is a demonstration by work of the faith you profess. Please joyfully serve Jesus Christ and let us know which committee(s) you want to remain on and/or join. Mark it down on your pledge commitment. If you have questions, we will have a Fall Festival after church on Oct. 18 where committees and fellowship groups will be represented.

Your generosity is an outflow of the generosity of God. Thank you always for your prayers, encouragement, and support for our church.

Mary L. Herrmann, Stewardship Chair, and the FUMCOR Finance Committee

This Saturday, Oct. 3!



Volunteer Opportunities

Bereavement Committee Needs More Help

When a member of our congregation (past or present) passes, their family often chooses to have the service held at our church with a gathering following in the Fellowship Hall.

The Bereavement Committee, headed by Lisa Laird and Pam Conlin, works to make that gathering time comfortable. If the family wants tablecloths and flowers on the tables, those will be provided. If the family wants to cater a meal, the committee will work with the caterers to set up and serve as needed. The committee also serves coffee, punch and cookies to the family and guests. Someone must bake those cookies.

Through the years, many women from this church (and a couple of men) have volunteered to be cookie bakers. Are you willing to be a baker? If so, please tell Lisa or Pam so they can put you on the contact list when needed. Are you willing to help serve the family and their guests? Again, please tell Lisa or Pam.

We have a faithful group of ladies who pitch in at every service, but it would be wonderful if we could expand that group and have a few more to call on.



Patti Gardenias serves coffee at the memorial for Jim Conlin last December. Jim's son Mike Conlin is at the center of the photo.



FUMCOR Supports Our College Students

By Loretta Cudney, Co-chair of the Christian Education Committee

This year six members of our congregation received scholarships from our dedicated Scholarship Funds.

Heather Cardenas is attending Riverside Community College, studying American Sign Language and Interpretation. She hopes to help others to be able to "hear" what's happening.

Christina Graves, our Children and Youth Director, is attending South Coast College to become a Court Reporter.

Sean Lomax, a choir member here, is studying Commercial Music and Performance at California Baptist University. We all have enjoyed hearing him perform.

Jonathon Williams is continuing his education at California Baptist University to earn a Masters in Education/Credential so he can be an elementary teacher.

Stephen Turkson was on vacation when the picture was taken. He is entering University of California, Riverside, as a junior to study Sociology.

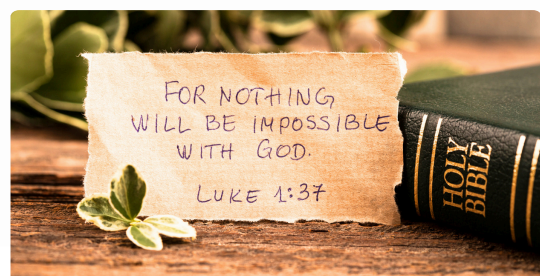
Leslie Tomlinson, a choir member, was also on vacation. She is continuing her education at Cal State Northridge to obtain her Masters of Science in Assistive Technology and Human Services.

Presently she is a Speech Language Pathologist Assistant and Assistive Technology Specialist and Assistive Technology Manager. When she receives her Masters degree, she will be stepping into the role of Director of Augmented Alternative Communication and Assistive Technology.

We are privileged in this congregation to have had very generous donors who established Scholarship Funds for the members of our congregation to attend higher education.

Everyone is always welcome to add to the funds or begin a new one. One of the dedicated funds is part of the Christian Education Committee's budget. When you donate money during the Lenten Soup Suppers, those funds are used for scholarships for our members.

We wish the very best to our students as they move along their educational journey. Let's keep them in our prayers throughout the year.



World Communion Sunday

At 10 am Sunday, Oct. 4, you are invited to participate in World Communion Sunday, an international celebration of our shared Christian heritage. This is also Miracle Sunday where we celebrate the vast network of United Methodist missionaries around the world.



Welcome Home!

It was an exciting Sunday Sept. 27 to welcome into our fellowship (from left front): Austin Chandler, and Michael Chandler, Sean Lomax, Michael McDonald, and Tara Powers.

If you desire to join our church as a member, we have another chance this month.

Please contact the church office
(951) 683-7831

Laitiy Sunday

Oct. 18

The lay people of the church make up the fabric of support for our missions and ministries. Our guest speaker will be Sophie Weiss and our theme will be about the way the laypeople of the church are organized to run it. After church come out and ask questions about the committees at a Fall Festival!



Children and Youth Ministries



Parents Morning Out

Wednesdays, 9 am-12 pm

Need a little time for yourself? We are here for you! Parents Morning Out is available on Wednesdays from 9 am to 12 noon for children ages 18 months to 5 years. Whether you need to run errands, attend appointments, or simply enjoy a little break, we provide a safe, loving, and fun environment for your little ones. We would love to welcome your child!



Youth Night

Oct. 11, 5 to 6:30 pm

Youth Room

Join us for an evening of dinner, fellowship, and fun at Youth Night.

Come enjoy a delicious meal, connect with friends, and spend time together in faith and friendship.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Contact:

Christina Graves

951-212-5725

childrensdirector@firstchurchriverside.org

United Methodist Men

Sunday, Oct. 11



A Voice for the Voiceless at UMM Lunch

The United Methodist Men will host their monthly luncheon after church on Sunday, Oct 11, so the congregation can hear more about an important nonprofit organization that provides training for Court Appointed Special Advocates, who represent the interests of children in court.

Our featured speaker will be Brianna Miller of the "Voices for Children" organization. Founded in 1980 in Southern California, it has grown to nearly 1,000 nonprofit CASA programs operating in 49 states.

Voices for Children recruits and trains volunteers to serve as court appointed advocates for a particular young person in foster care. Their job is to spend time with the child and report to the court about the child's progress and needs. This individualized advocacy helps judges make the most informed decisions for children's futures.

Because it is October, chef David Fraser will show us how United Methodists celebrate Oktoberfest with brats, a vegan presentation, all the fixins, as well as a seasonally appropriate desert.

Cost for the lunch is \$6 per person or \$20 per family. The lunch is open to all.

In addition, the United Methodist Men continue a weekly Prayer Breakfast, from 7 to 8 am each Friday in Mary's Kitchen. Come share fellowship, faith, coffee, donuts. All men are invited to attend!



Brianna Miller recruits new volunteers to protect children and youth. Much of her work involves protecting the privacy of children, as you see below.

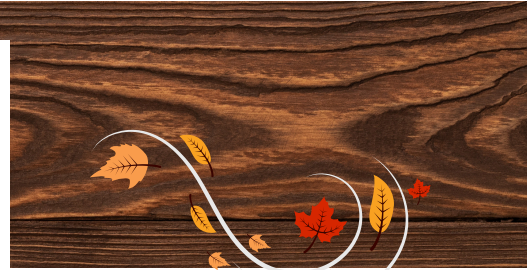


FUN WITHOUT FACES:

Snapshots of our CASA kids making memories

Counterclockwise from top left: CASA and youth visit local pumpkin patch; youth explores his passion for music during a visit to Guitar Center with his CASA; CASA and youth enjoy carnival rides at a local family-friendly festival; youth and CASA visit the zoo and enjoy seeing the giraffes.





Events and Meetings

Oct. 8 -- 11 am Lunch Bunch at Georgie's Mediterranean Cuisine. 5225 Canyon Crest Dr. (near the Ralph's)

Weekly Walk About

Great weather for a walk!
Every Wednesday morning
NEW TIME: 7 am at Ryan Bonaminio Park.
We meet in the last parking lot near the playground.

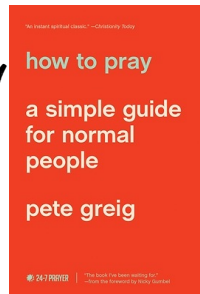


Book Study Continues on Thursday nights!

If you are new to this study group,
call: Pam 951-237-5470.

Bible Study continues on Thursdays
---6:45 pm social time
---class starts at 7pm via Zoom.

The book we are reading is:
"How to Pray: a simple guide for normal people."



Donna Woodard
2026 UWF "Quiet Disciple"

The UWF Quiet Discipleship Recognition is an honor given to members in local units of the United Women in Faith. The recognition was designed to celebrate individuals who demonstrate love through humble, behind-the-scenes service.

Our longtime member, Donna Woodard, is moving to Utah to live with her son and his family. She will be greatly missed. Her final Sunday is Oct. 11.



Welcome!

Dear women of the FUMCOR congregation, guests, and neighbors, you are welcome to attend our meetings, studies, and events.

"United Women in Faith shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church."

For more information:
unitedwomeninfaith.firstumc@yahoo.com



Familiar Lunch Bunch smiles!

Prayers and Praises

We pray for...

Jaque Vaca, Christina Maddox's nephew Charlie,
Linda Rydzik, John McDonald, Julian Cardenas,
Vivian Lowe, Julie Williams, Reko Williams,
Neko Williams, David Cardenas, Patrick Russell,
Isaiah Whisner, Cynthia Diaz, Ruth Martinez, Don Larsen,
Susan Reardon, Rollin Edmunds, Christina Graves,
Gary Spencer, Eric Russler, Lee Ann Salmon,
Dean Michalka, James Herron, Tom Kennedy, Bob Bahnsen,
Regan Pope, Virginia Bahnsen, Eduardo Reyes,
Tina Dungan, Lupe Vela, Ronnie Tovar, Roger Murray,
Lolita Manacop, Sharon Henry, Jun Valino, Jon Dugan,
Marie Madden, Gitanjali Spencer, George Callow,
Norma Nelson, Ed Lamers, Mack Davis, Pat Beals,
Michael Thompson, Marge Wolter, Melissa Williams,
Mary Boon, Mary Herrmann, Jim Ashworth, Melva Cooke,
Michelle Arguelles, John and Susan Logger,
Bill and Helen Nuchols, Robert and Benita Roberts,
Scott and DeAnn McWilliams, the family of Grace Reyes,
our families, neighbors, country, and world

faith

The fruit of the Spirit is love that then brings us into joy, the joy of the Lord, always.
Always.

Your Steadfast Joy

When "always" feels larger than our capacity, you remain near.

In gratitude, we bring our gifts, signs of love learned from you.

Quiet our anxious hearts and turn our attention toward what is true, honorable,
and worthy of praise. Shape us into a people whose generosity is gentleness
made visible, whose offerings declare we are on the side of our neighbors.

Receive what we place in your hands and let it become
courage, welcome, and hope.

Guard us with your peace as we press on in Christ. Amen.

(Philippians 4:1-9)

Birthdays and Anniversaries

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

October Anniversaries

- 12 Tim and Dana Traver
- 19 Roy and Cheryl Riggs
- 20 David and Sarah Fraser



October Birthdays

- 1 Mary Lou Kerrick
- 1 Lillian Popko
- 2 Shirley Parks
- 3 Melva Cooke
- 3 Norma Nelson
- 5 Rolando Arguelles
- 8 Matt Gorder
- 8 John McDonald
- 9 Steve Walker
- 11 Bev DeFrance
- 11 Barbara Spencer
- 14 Terri Whieldon
- 15 Liz Jennings
- 17 Corinne Graves
- 17 Cora Reupert
- 18 Jonathon Williams
- 19 Susan Straight
- 21 Susan Tomlinson
- 21 Doris Washburn
- 24 Sabrina Gilbert
- 27 Holly Hough
- 29 Carol Cipra
- 29 Marilyn Robinson
- 31 Mary Mamea

*In all things,
give thanks*



What we need:

Candy for the trick or treat portion of the event. NO Peanut candy, because of allergies.

Drop it off at the church office before the event. Any questions? Call Kelly Weakly 951-203-8098

Get Set for Halloween Hop

Cartoon characters, superheroes and spooky spirits will be out to dance the night away from 5 to 7 pm, Sunday, Oct. 25, at the annual Halloween Hop.

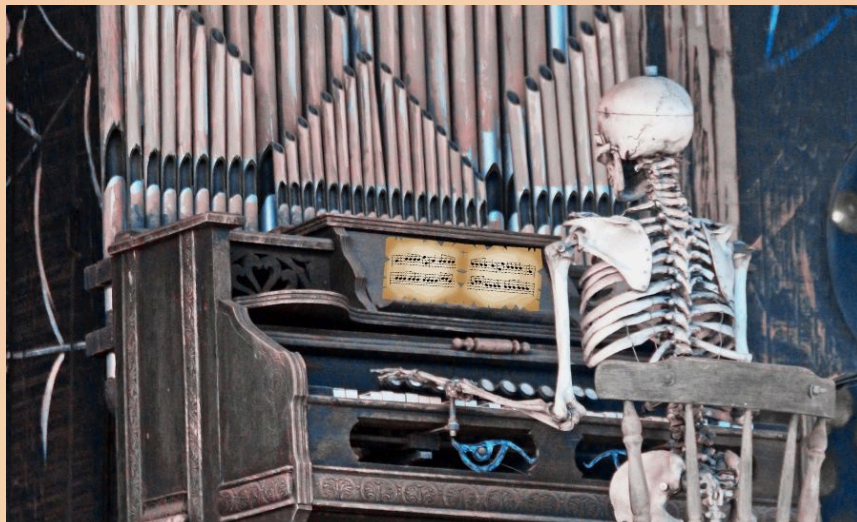
All ages are welcome to dance to Halloween tunes with a professional DJ who will bring the music, bubbles and hula hoops. We provide the pizza. This is a free event, and one of our church's fun traditions. Come join the party in the Fellowship Hall at 4845 Brockton Ave, Riverside. Bring a snack to share and a bag of candy for some trick or treating.

We have flyers to hand out to neighbors. Pick those up in church. Thanks to Faith and Fellowship group and the Outreach Committee for all the planning that goes into this event.

Speaking of our Preschool...

Howdy, Partners! Fall is in the air and we are enjoying the cooler weather. September was great with our first ever Grandparents Day celebration; everyone loved it! We had our Pasta Night, which was fun! Thank you for all who attended. And ending September with Pony Visits with Joyce Banks who has supported FUMPS for many years. October brings a lot spooky good times! Our preschoolers at FUMPS will be having their traditional costume parade - Lisa Skiver





Invite your friends, wear a costume and come hear the bone chilling sounds. All money raised goes to help update the organ operation and sound. On the left, a ghostly Lee Ann Salmon and on the right, Jenn Mahl and Val Othon.

Feel the Music in Your Bones

By Robert Phillips, organist



Unlock a host of haunted horrors with "Skeleton Keys," our annual Halloween organ concert, set for 7 pm Saturday, Oct. 24, in our sanctuary.

Organist Robert Phillips will be joined by several guest artists in this cadaverous cavalcade of boneyard ballads and terrifying tunes.

Saxophonist Jeff Benedict will offer a spooky serenade from the Great American Songbook. Soprano Yvonne Flagg will chant a delightfully downbeat ditty from the Gregorian requiem mass, as well as Gerald Finzi's setting of a somber sestet from Shakespeare's "Cymbeline."

Soprano Kris Lovekin will instigate an infestation by last year's pesty periplaneta, who return with a new song, and she'll lead the audience in the snappy "Addams Family Theme."

Our magnificent Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ will rattle your bones with Hendrik Andriessen's dramatic "Third Chorale," as well as John Williams' music from "Harry Potter" and a rhapsody based on Edgar Allen Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher." We'll see if anyone is brave enough to moonwalk to "Thriller" this time around!

And of course, no FUMCOR Halloween concert would be complete without a gaggle of Ghoultime Carols and Johann Sebastian Bach's "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor."

Admission to the event is free, with a freewill offering to support the Organ Dedicated Fund. A beneficent anonymous donor has offered to match all contributions, so the impact of your generosity will be doubled!

Each year, more and more audience members arrive in costume, so if you're so inclined, give your ghastly getup a trial run! If not, just sit back and enjoy the show, both on and off the stage!



The scurrying cockroaches will return

Meet at the Players



A group from church met at Riverside Community Players to see "Laughter on the 23rd Floor" on Sept. 19. Terri and Dennis Whieldon suggest two more outings together: "The Book of Will" at 2:30 pm Feb. 13 and "Something Afoot" at 2:30 pm July 3. Call the box office at (951) 683-4030 to order tickets and ask for section D.

Ongoing Events

- Sunday Worship - 10 am
- Sunday School for Children - 10:15 am
- Sunday School for Youth (2nd and 4th) - 10:15 am
- First Sundays - Holy Communion
- Third Sundays - Response Band leads Worship
- Third Sundays - Faith and Fellowship Events
- Bell Choir rehearsal - 7 pm Tuesdays
- The Response rehearsal - Wednesdays, 6:30 pm
- Aldersgate Chorale rehearsal - 7 pm Thursdays
- Men's Friday Prayer Breakfasts - 7 am

Miracle Sunday

The Council of Bishops' 2026 Miracle Sunday initiative invites congregations to help support 500 students annually to prepare for pastoral ministry across Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. This fund will strengthen our international UMC connection. Right now, 71 percent of clergy in the U.S. have master's degrees. Outside the U.S., less than 5 percent of clergy have master's degrees. This is a significant disparity.

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank, Bishop Grant Hagiya, and Bishop Mary Ann Swenson have all contributed to an \$11,000 anchor gift. We encourage others to give!

Please send your gift directly to The Endowment for Theological Education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines using this link: <https://www.endowftecc.org/donate>

An endowment is like planting a tree: its roots grow deep, its branches spread wide, and future generations benefit from its shade and fruit.



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

Church Staff

Rev. J.T. Kim, Senior Pastor
pastorjtkim@firstchurchriverside.org

Crystal Foote, Office Manager
officemanager@firstchurchriverside.org

Beverly Devine, Secretary
secretary@firstchurchriverside.org

Christina Graves, Children and Youth
childrensdirector@firstchurchriverside.org

Yvonne Flagg, Choir Director
choirdirector@firstchurchriverside.org

Gayla Lonsbery, Bell Director
belldirector@firstchurchriverside.org

Robert Phillips, Organist
organist@firstchurchriverside.org

Lisa Skiver, Preschool Director
fumpsesbcglobal.net

Jesse Ruiz, Custodial Manager
jruiz28880@aol.com

Brad Tomlinson, Campus Supervisor
bradtomlinson4@yahoo.com



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