

### **Pastor's Ponderings**

We are in the Easter season, the season of resurrection. The image that sticks with me this year from Easter is Mary Magdalena turning away from the tomb of Jesus. We know he wasn't there anyway, but she didn't. I imagine Mary weeping, exhausted and overwhelmed, standing before the tomb, and turning away, back toward the living Jesus. She discovered the Lord again, as she turned away from the place of death. Mary is the disciple that embodies the call to turn away from the dead places in the world, and back toward the living response of God.

Easter is the call for us to do as Mary does. We are called to turn from death and toward life. With that image in mind, what tombs are holding us hostage? What tombs insulate you from life? Dogma, tradition and expectation can be tombs which protect us from new thinking and new relationships. Loneliness and despair seal us in tombs that we pray again and again for God to heal. Heartbreak and resentment entomb us and demand forgiveness to break open. Easter is the answer to all death. God is about life and breaking open these tombs that hold us. Easter is the celebration that God will get the final word and roll away the stones that barricade us from living.

The United Methodist Church is entombed in an argument about homosexuality. I wonder if you've heard about it? I suspect there isn't anyone in America who hasn't heard that traditional Christian religions in America are having a difficult time agreeing on what God is thinking about members of the LGBTQ community. Some Christians believe the Bible speaks against homosexuality and it is a sin which separates people from God. Some Christians believe God is love and all love is of God. Most people I've spoken with have their mind and heart made up about what the right answer is. I have to confess that my mind and heart are made up and have been for a long time.

Currently, the Judicial Council (which is the equivalent to the Supreme Court of the UMC) is studying/reviewing a case about the election and subsequent appointment of a self-avowed, married lesbian in the Western Jurisdiction of the UMC. If you want to review the issues of this case, which is pretty complicated, I encourage you to google Bishop Karen Oliveto and you will discover many articles and statements about her, our denomination and the challenge to her status. I hope you will pray for our church and the people involved. Any ruling, no matter what it is, will result in some people feeling angry about injustice and faithlessness. Any ruling will result, I believe, in a global change to the structure of our denomination that will impact the ministry we can and will do for decades to come. The tomb of polarization will be broken open one way or another. Because I believe God is involved in all that we do, I believe God can transform even this breach in relationship to a life-giving event.

No matter what happens, I believe that God always finds a way for life to break out. God always leads people toward hope, restoration, healing and new possibilities. What I absolutely know is that no matter what happens our UMC Vista will still be here, working together to reach out to the community. We have work to do in the name of Jesus! We are called to feed people, educate children, support our seniors, raise up strong faith leaders, celebrate God with all we do and say and bear witness to God's unfailing love for us all! Do pray and then, let's get to work again, being the body of Christ!

Blessed Easter friends!

Rev. Dr. Leigh Ann Shaw

### **Greater San Diego Music Coterie**

Please join us on Sunday, May 7 at 4:00 pm in the Sanctuary as the Greater San Diego Music Coterie presents José Mauricio Nunes Garcia's "Mass of Saint Cecilia". Participants include Carol Pence (alto) and Rev. Frank Hallock (baritone). Free-will donation at the door.

## Where does our money go?

We just got through Easter and that means summer is not far away. And what do many people do in the summer? Go on vacation! For those with children, you are trying to think of some place that does not require a lot of driving in the heat and with children who every ten minutes want to know how much further. If no children, then perhaps you will be flying to an exotic island in the Caribbean or even going to Hawaii. Or if you are lucky like me, you try to find out which of your daughters in Hawaii has an empty bed for a few weeks (or months)! The **key** is to **plan ahead**. You are going to be gone for a few days or weeks, so you pay your mortgage or rent, utilities are covered, pets taken care of, have cash and your credit cards and as you walk out the door, your child wants to know how they are going to put their money in the Sunday School offering if they aren't there. "Oops! What about our pledge to the church? Oh, we'll pay double when we get home!" This is when the electronic payment system would come in handy. Most of us have this for our major ongoing obligations - mortgage, rent, utilities, etc., so why not your pledge to the church? After all, the church has monthly payments such as salaries, utilities, upkeep and maintenance, and if too many of our congregation are on vacation over the summer months at the same time and put off paying their pledge until they get home, your Finance Committee could have a problem. We are doing extremely well so far this year and that makes the committee very happy, so let's keep up the good work. After all, isn't that what we are all about? Doing good work in the name of the Lord!

-Tommy Thomson

Total Budget for 2017	\$501,275
Total Received (16 weeks)	\$212,928
Total Spent	\$183,792

## Shalom Team

All work of the church is Shalom work. May we be mindful of Shalom in all that we do. Here are some highlights of recent activity.

- Our pastor traveled to Africa University in Zimbabwe to learn more about the school, its students, its faculty and its mission.
- Several members of Reconciling Ministries attended a play at Palomar College, "Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith," to learn more about the struggles of the Muslim community.
- We will participate in a dedication ceremony of a new Peace Pole at Vista High School on May 3. It replaces the pole planted in 1995, which had to be removed because of wood rot.
- We pray each Sunday around the Peace Pole, asking for individual, community and world peace.
- The work of Reconciling Ministries continues, seeking your support.

## Calexico Neighborhood House

### Cottage food program

The Cottage Food Operation (CFO) is a state law that allows persons to sell homemade non-perishable food goods, like bake goods, flour tortillas, fruit tamales, etc. The Calexico Neighborhood House Micro Business Center helps persons to obtain the required permits and licenses to sell food goods, as allowed by the State Cottage Food Programs.

The Calexico Neighborhood Micro Business Center received support from the UMC Vista Cable Grant to provide technical assistance and financial support to help persons obtain the required business licenses and permits. The program has been having a great response from the residents of the Imperial County.

The State Cottage Food Law has a pre-approved list of food where no fresh fruit or vegetable, meat, and cheese is allowed in the food goods. State Assembly member Eduardo Garcia is working to introduce a state bill to improve the State Cottage Food Operation program and expand opportunities for marginalized populations who often lack financial capital to open a restaurant.

Eduardo Garcia approached Calexico Neighborhood House to hear directly from clients. Mr. Garcia organized a community meeting on March 24 and on April 12 to this purpose.

-Jacque Howard

## Cable Snapshot

- North County Lifeline sent a letter thanking UMC Vista for the Cable grant of \$15,000 to support Project LIFE to help end human trafficking. With this money they can work 1:1 with victims on their path to self-reliance, teach teens and pre-teens about trafficking and how to avoid becoming a victim, train adults to recognize the signs of trafficking and how to intervene.
- International Relief Teams acknowledged the \$11,000 they received from the Cable grant which enabled them to support two home builds in the community of Fuentes del Valle in Tijuana, Mexico.

Please read their letters posted on the large bulletin board near the Scrip table.

Flame Editors  
Lenore Averell and Barbara Mitchell  
Flame Production  
Paula Amaro  
WEB Master  
Jim McGlocklin

Next deadline is Wednesday, May 17, 2017  
Comments or suggestions, please let us know.

**The Flame (monthly newsletter)**  
**United Methodist Church of Vista**  
**490 S. Melrose Drive**  
**Vista, CA 92081**

## Communion Sunday, May 7

The May 7 communion offering will help “Plant With A Purpose”. For over 30 years “Plant With A Purpose” has worked in some of the world’s poorest places transforming the lives of children and families living in poverty. Their goal is to help communities develop spiritual renewal, environmental restoration and economic empowerment. You can help supply trees, food, clean water and agricultural training that restores communities and helps families provide for their children.

-Sue Humphrey, World Missions Committee

## X-tra Giving for May

Our X-tra Giving will be the Veterans Association of North County. Known as VANC, located at the old police station in Oceanside, was created by a group of dedicated veterans to help other veterans, members of all branches of the military (including reserves), and their families by providing support and resources. VANC is an umbrella association that represents more than 30 veteran organizations to serve as a one-stop resource center to assist folks however needed. See the list of items needed in the Narthex.

## Haiti slide show and lunch, May 21

Do you remember when several of us visited Haiti for a week last October? Even though it was six months ago, that experience remains fresh in our minds, a wonderful heartwarming time making new friends and meeting lots of children in this poor but beautiful island country. There will be a slide show and a free luncheon with typical Haitian food served in the fellowship hall on Sunday, May 21, following the second service. We will share experiences, answer questions and see where Haiti is compared to when I visited Haiti in 2012.

-Kathy Johnson

## Suicide Prevention

Many of you know me as the Office Manager at the church and that I volunteered in Boy Scouts on the district level and as a committee member in Troop 709. Our district just experienced a second death by suicide in December 2016, with the first back in May 2015 (ages 15 and 16), as well as two adults. There is no age limit. Please see the information below and follow your instinct.

Are you concerned about someone you love? The following suicide warnings may mean someone is at risk. Risk is greater if a behavior is new or seems related to a painful event, loss or change.

- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

If you are concerned or you need help, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800.273.8244 or go to [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

-Paula Amaro

## Student Ministry News (Beckie Henselmeier)

- Maker’s Fun Factory VBS 2017 registration is now “live” and can be found at [umcvista.org/vbs](http://umcvista.org/vbs). This year’s theme is about being created especially by God for a purpose. VBS will run the week of July 24- 28, 2017 from 6 - 8 pm daily. If you’re interested in volunteering, please contact Beckie Henselmeier.
- Our Second Annual “Movies on the Lawn” kicks off on Friday, June 23. This year, the Education Committee is hosting a “shoe drive.” Here’s how it works: Simply collect your used shoes and bag up all unwanted gently-used shoes. Tennis shoes, casual shoes, dress shoes, boots, cleats, soccer shoes and any other type of shoes that are in a wearable condition (skates and golf shoes not accepted). Shoes must be in pairs - no single shoes accepted. You can tie, rubber band or buckle them together (please do not tape). Our shoe drive will run from May 1 - 31. The shoes collected will be sorted and delivered to developing nations in need of resources! See Beckie Henselmeier or Colleen Guffey for any questions.

## A Special Thanks

The Education Committee would like to offer many thanks for everyone who came, served, set up, and donated to our second “Easter Walk.” It was a great way to start Holy Week and prepare our hearts for the events ahead. We look forward to another Walk next year.

## United Methodist on contemporary issues

“The United Methodist Church has a long history of concern for social justice. Its members have often taken forthright positions on controversial issues involving Christian principles. Early Methodists expressed their opposition to the slave trade, to smuggling, and to the cruel treatment of prisoners.” “The Social Principles, while not to be considered church law, are a prayerful and thoughtful effort on the part of General Conference to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation as historically demonstrated in UM traditions.” (Book of Discipline, 2016, page 105)

Our Social Principles are broken into six sections and address many issues of our modern world. The six sections are: The Natural World, The Nurturing Community, The Social Community, The Economic Community, The Political Community, and the World Community.

Our statement (in part) on The Death Penalty from the Political Community: We believe the death penalty denies the power of Christ to redeem, restore, and transform all human beings. The UMC is deeply concerned about crime throughout the world and the value of any life taken by a murder or homicide. We believe all human life is sacred and created by God and therefore, we must see all human life as significant and valuable. When governments implement the death penalty (capital punishment), then the life of the convicted person is devalued and all possibility of change in that person’s life ends. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and that the possibility of reconciliation with Christ comes through repentance. This gift of reconciliation is offered to all individuals without exception and gives all life new dignity and sacredness. For this reason, we oppose the death penalty (capital punishment) and urge its elimination from all criminal codes.



## Happy “May” Birthdays

Rosalynn Kim (1)

Russ Townsend (2)

Tim Arrowsmith (3)

Betty Wayne (5)

Gilbert Brown, Gary Felien, Maggie Graziano (14)

Laura Biggs, Michael Burns (16)

Sean Casey (17)

Max Foss (22)

Adam Way, Ethel Arrowsmith (23)

Paula Amaro, Lorraine Bradshaw (24)

Linda Boyd, Jung Kim (24)

Vic Johnston (26)

Annelise Gerwig, Traci Wheeler (27)

Nick May, Timothy McGinn, Amber Schneider (28)

Elton Nixon (29)

Caedmon Bowlin, Pamela Fantin, Elese Newman (31)

*Note: If your birthday is not listed, please call Paula at the church office.*

## Why I joined the Reconciling Ministries Community

*Reconciling Ministries is a national ecumenical organization recognizing the full inclusion of all people in God's kingdom. Within our Vista UMC is a small group of folks that have come together to learn more about how to advocate for inclusion of all people in our church. We have begun this process of learning, and some of our team will be sharing periodically. We hope that you will prayerfully participate in this conversation and share your thoughts with us. UMC Vista is NOT an official member of the Reconciling Ministries Movement, only our small group. We welcome your questions and concerns.*

I feel so lucky and blessed to have all of you, members and friends of UMC Vista, as my church family! As many of you know, I am also blessed with a large family of children, grandchildren and relatives. Recently I attended the wedding, a civil ceremony, of my nephew and his partner. They have been together for some time and wished to get married. Thank goodness, California is a state in which the voters allow marriages of gays and lesbians. However, it made me very sad, as important as my faith and this church is to me, that this is not the case in this church or any United Methodist church, as the Book of Discipline expressly forbids the marriage of gays and lesbians. Now, why is that? Is anyone being hurt or has any crime been committed? – only that of being different. And yet, from what I have seen, God loves variety and diversity! He made us, and each of us is different, unique from anyone else. What a gray and dull world it would be if we were all just the same. But how interesting and vibrant are our differences! These are thoughts that have been in my mind and in my heart.

–Kathy Johnson

## Family Game Night in May

Family Game night will be on May 12 at 6:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. Join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. For questions or for more information, please see Suzanne McMurchie.

## Heartfelt Thanks

I wish to thank the many members of the congregation who called, visited, took me to the doctor, prayer for a speedy recovery and sent cards to me during my recuperation from foot surgery during January and February. Words cannot express my appreciation for the kindness and consideration of my church family.

With much appreciation,  
Sara Baldwin

Dear Church Family

It was a joyous and powerful Holy Week beginning with all the hard work for the Easter Walk done by Education, particularly Beckie Henselmeier and Deb Forbis. Powerful! Thank you. A tremendous thank you to all who stepped up to help with our Easter festivities—for all those who helped fill Easter eggs, who helped with setup and cleanup and especially for our wonderful Easter potluck! Thanks to all who brought goodies that all of us enjoyed! Thanks to our Outreach Committees and UMW. Thanks to those who provided cash donations and gift cards to help with our purchases. Thanks for our wonderful three services. Our Easter festivities went very well, and we received many compliments about how folks enjoyed their day with us. It's always an amazing gift when this congregation comes together in God's name to be a light to our community and to ourselves as well. Christ is risen...He is risen indeed! Again, thank you and blessings.

Barbara Mitchell

## Lenten and Easter celebrations

The Lenten and Easter season was a busy time for many of our church members! Many hours were involved with the planning, implementing and for those in the Music Ministry, rehearsing! Thank you all for making this Holy season remarkable!

- Three Lenten Study classes were led by Lyn Berry, Beckie Henselmeier and Barbara Mitchell.
- The Easter Walk was an interactive, worshipful and family-friendly journey of the Easter Story. Special thanks to Beckie Henselmeier and her team - Deb Forbis, Lynda Mounts, Alfred/Charlotte Chappell, Larry Veysada, Pam Fantin, Carol Pence, Jennette Marusak, Gary Lamb, Katie Pierce, Kathy Johnson, Barbara Mitchell, Beth Hallock, Margene Haase, Pastor Frank Hallock and Pastor Leigh Ann Shaw.
- Thank you to Tom and Sue Humphrey for bringing their friend Mike Smith's donation of Palm leaves.
- All Church Work day led by Billy Stempson and his team of fellow Board of Trustees members and volunteers to make the campus ready for Easter; special thanks to Jake Henselmeier for installing the fan in the Nursery.
- The Music Ministry presented the concert, “Jesus, Won't You Come Down” written and directed by Pastor Frank Hallock featuring the Sunshine Magic Singers, Chancel Choir, Anderson Handbell Choir, Chamber Orchestra members and Carol Graham, organist. The sanctuary was filled with beautiful, uplifting and powerful music.
- Filling the plastic Easter eggs and organizing the Easter Brunch Potluck was Barbara Mitchell and her team. (See her thank you article above.)
- Thank you to our Sunday School teacher, liturgists, acolytes, ushers, sound board and video techs!

-Paula Amaro

## United Methodist Women's Corner

- The Circles will meet on Tuesday, May 2: Esther Circle will meet at Coco's Restaurant at 11:00 am. Ruth Circle will meet at the Flower Fields in Carlsbad. You must be at the gate at 10 am for free admission. Kenworthy Circle meets at 1:30 pm in room 203.
- The UMW Organization meeting is May 9 at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall.
- The UMW leadership meeting is May 16 at 1:30 pm in Fellowship Hall.
- Get ready! Our May 13 Bake Sale at Farmers' Market is coming up. We need items to sell, workers to set up, help sell and clean up. Containers are on the Hospitality Counter in the Narthex. Baked goods can be dropped off at office on Friday, May 12 (until 2:30 pm) or as early as possible at Farmers' Market on Saturday. Have questions? Call Marlene Philippi, 760.732.0676.

## Pray together for...

Family of Terry Boyd, Loretta Pierce, Maggie/Giorgio Graziano, Ed Christensen, Bob Hickman, Joan Lindegren, Ron Bradshaw, Joan Brainerd, Joan Bearss, Nancy Koski, Carol Yunt, Randie Annin, Russ Townsend, Alice Leclair

## Stay connected

E-mail: [umcvista@umcvista.org](mailto:umcvista@umcvista.org)

Website: [www.umcvista.org](http://www.umcvista.org)

Facebook: United Methodist Church of Vista

Be sure to check us out on Yelp!

If you want to furnish flowers for Sunday worship, please call Paula at the church office for the date you want. ONE date still available - Dec. 14.

**Please join us at Vista High School at 3 p.m. Wednesday, May 3,** for a dedication ceremony of the new Peace Pole. Our church's Shalom Team was instrumental in replacing the old Peace Pole, which succumbed to wood rot. Call Lyn Berry for additional information at 760.201.6113.

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Sunday School 9:00 am  
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