



July 2026

The Courier

First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park

22700 Sherman Way, West Hills, CA 91307-2396

Church 818.340.2950

E-mail: crossandflame@att.net

Website: <http://www.umccp.org>

Pastor: eshinpauill@gmail.com

Welcome to First Church where everyone is either our friend or family.

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am

Heart to Heart

This month, our nation turns 250 years old. And when I look out at this congregation — at the faces I see every Sunday, the stories I know, the languages and cultures and journeys that are all gathered under one roof. I think we might be one of the best places in America to celebrate that.

Because we already are what America keeps trying to become. Many of us came from somewhere else. Some of us were born here but carry the stories of those who weren't. All of us have found our way to this place, this church, this family. And together, we are proof that people from every background and every walk of life can love God, love each other, and build something beautiful.

As an immigrant, I know what it means to start over in a new place and dare to believe in a future you cannot yet see. This country, for all its imperfections, has been that place for so many of us — a place where the dream of something better was worth the sacrifice to get here. Generation after generation, people gave everything they had for a future that was not guaranteed.

That sounds like faith to me.

God spoke to His people once when they were living far from home, uncertain about the future, wondering if the best days were behind them. And He said: "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29:11, NRSV).

That promise was not spoken to people who had it all figured out. It was spoken to exiles. To people starting over. To people who needed to be reminded that God's plans were bigger than their circumstances.

I believe that promise belongs to us too. To this church. To this nation. At 250 years old, with all its struggles and all its promise, America is still becoming. And so are we. And the God who has brought us this far has not run out of plans.

You are good people who love God and trust Him. That is not a small thing — especially right now. Hold onto that. Bring it with you into this new year of our nation's life. And know that the best days are not behind us. They are still ahead.

July

Pastor

Elaine Shin-Paull

Music Director/ Accompanist

Nathan Stephens

Administrative Assistant

Jyl Lawrence

Sunday School Childcare

Veronica Cabrera

Denise Lenore

Teen Ministry

Dante Wilson

Lay Leader

Roger Johnson

Courier Layout

Sharon Mountford

AV Operators

Bernie Godwin

Preston Simpkin

Michael Mosbe



Resident Bishop

Dottie Escobedo-Frank

North District Superintendent

Rev. Garth Gilliam

Birthdays & Anniversaries

July Birthdays

- 4 Francisco Hernandez
- 7 Carol Berns
- 11 Noah Anderson
Roger Johnson
- 16 Judith Austin
- 19 Shirley Thomson
- 23 Nanette Roberson
- 30 Devon Cates
Elma Villacisneros
- 31 Lynda Gibson

Anniversaries

- 26 Kimo & Jodi Guerrero
Robert & Flo Lam
If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please let us know.



July Altar Flowers

- 5 Open
- 12 Michael & Miko Mosbe
- 19 Bernice Richter's
Birthday
- 26 Jodi & Kimo Guerrero's
Wedding Anniversary

If you would like to provide altar flowers on a given Sunday, in honor or memory of someone, please contact Mary Mackay, 818-731-5872.

July Calendar

- Every Monday Prayer meeting, 7:30pm to 8:30pm
Meeting ID: 898 8990 4696 — Passcode: 87556
- Every Thursday Bible Study, 11:00am to 12:30pm in the Library
- 4 Men's Breakfast at 8:30am
Weiler's West Hills Deli, 21161 Victory, Canoga Park
- 5 Celebrate America's 250th Birthday with Us!
Join us on Sunday, July 5th after worship for a festive Bingo Game Day as we celebrate our nation's 250th birthday together! Come enjoy hotdogs, chips, prizes, and lots of fun with your church family. It's a great time to laugh, play, and give thanks for the blessings of this nation, and each other!
Family Ministries & Outreach Team
- 8 UWF Faith, Hope & Love Circle at 12:00-1:30pm at
PF Chang's, 21821 Oxnard St. Woodland Hills
- 9 UWF Sarah Circle at 9:15-10:15am
Nico's Family Restaurant, 7166 Shoup Ave., West Hills
- 14 Administrative Committee Meeting, 6:30pm, Library
- 15 UMF Faith, Bookends Circle at 1:00pm in Library



West Valley Food Pantry

A donation basket is always in the hallway for your contributions. This month's most needed items are Peanut Butter, no bigger than 16 oz; Canned pop-top chili; Chicken, Tuna, or salmon,—canned, or pouched, Pop-Top; low-sodium soup, & cup noodles; Pasta and Canned Pasta Sauce, no jars, please; Beef, Chicken & Turkey Jerky; and Wipes for babies & adults.



Mission U

2026 Mission U is being held at Bell Memorial UMC, located in Rowland Heights, CA beginning midday on July 24 and concluding before lunch on July 26. Mission U will explore the times in the Bible when people experienced Emmanuel or "God with us." What can we learn from these Emmanuel encounters in the Bible to help inform our discernment of faith, hope, and love in action?

Registration is through June 30 and the cost is \$150.00.
Hotel Reservations can be made by calling 626 810-1818.

Good News

In 2025 California Pacific Conference United Women in Faith surpassed their Pledge, giving 123%.

UWFaith Mission Work

We currently support missions in 35 other states and Puerto Rico.
We also support missions in 38 foreign countries.

Program Resources

UWFaith members, children and youth continue to read, not only our recommended books (see UWFaith.org – Program Resources catalog of books, the four plans and five categories) to select enlightening books.

Spiritual Growth

Excerpt from the current Pacific Waves

Love enables us to care for others with compassion and grace.
Joy gives us strength even when circumstances are difficult.
Peace calms our hearts and reminds us that God is in control.
Patience helps us endure challenges and show understanding to others.
Kindness allows us to be a blessing through our words and actions.
Goodness inspires us to choose what is right and honorable.
Faithfulness keeps us committed to God
and trustworthy in our relationships.
Gentleness reflects Christ's humility and tenderness.
Self-Control helps us make wise choices that honor God.

*Confirm gatherings
before you go.*

Bookends

Will not meet in July

Sarah Circle

Thursday, July 9 at
9:15 am for breakfast
at Nico's Restaurant

Faith, Hope & Love

Wednesday,
July 8 at 1:00 pm
Place to be announced



Annual Conference 2026

The 42nd session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference convened June 17–20, 2026, at the La Quinta Resort and Club in La Quinta, California, under the theme "Ending Spiritual & Physical Hunger: Astonish!" As your pastor, I was privileged to attend and represent First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park. Here are a few highlights I want to share with you.

Resolution 26-03: Kairos Palestine II

One of the more significant discussions at this year's session involved Resolution 26-03, which endorsed the Kairos Palestine II document, a statement on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from Palestinian Christian leaders. I submitted amendments to the resolution, seeking to bring greater balance and pastoral care to its harsh language. While more than 30% of the delegation voted in favor of the amendments, they were ultimately not adopted, and the resolution passed as originally presented. I am grateful for those who engaged in this conversation thoughtfully and prayerfully. As your pastor, I remain committed to walking with you through complex and sensitive issues with grace, fairness, and a deep trust in God's sovereignty.

Church Closures

This year's conference also marked a difficult season for our connection. Nine churches were closed: Westmont UMC (Pomona Valley), Mission Community UMC (Rosemead), Montclair First UMC (Montclair), San Gabriel First UMC (San Gabriel), Young Hwa UMC (Los Angeles), Chapel of the Valley UMC (El Cajon), Bethany UMC (Honolulu), North Oxnard UMC (Oxnard), and La Trinidad UMC (Los Angeles). We hold these communities in prayer and give thanks for the witness they offered over the years.

Apportionments

The conference approved a proposed 2027 apportioned budget of \$8,669,562 — a reduction of nearly \$733,000 (7.8%) from the current year. This reflects the conference's commitment to thoughtful stewardship and financial sustainability. A new tiered tithing model is also being explored, which would set each congregation's apportionment at 9%, 10%, or 11% of its total operating income. More details will be shared as this conversation continues.

In His Service,

Elaine Shin-Paull, Pastor, First UMC of Canoga Park



The congregation on Pentecost

Vision: Ending Spiritual & Physical Hunger - Astonish 42nd Annual Conference

Worship - Prayer - Fellowship - Inspirational Messages - Renewed Friendships - Business - Honoring God's Disciples - New Friendships

For these and many other reasons, Nancy and I (Mike Easterly) want to thank Roger Johnson and Pastor Elaine for asking us to represent FUMC of Canoga Park at Annual Conference. Methodism is a connectional denomination - growing our love for God, our love for others and our role in making disciples for Christ.

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank's message on "The State of the Church" reviewed the life time of Methodism from John Wesley's focus on social holiness through the many problems, challenges and opportunities of an ever-changing world around us. How do we react to these changes? How do we adapt to these changes while preserving our heritage, the spiritual strengths of our existing ministries and the opportunities to reach others through ministries addressing their spiritual & physical hunger.

Rev. Ken Suhr, Director of Vitality Ministries, talked about "Moving from Acceleration to Resonance" - the importance of discernment before action, encountering God and one another through our presence, listening and serving with humility and compassion.

I look forward to sharing more through our conversations face-to-face, in meetings and working together in a broad arena of service in and beyond the local church. I have much to learn and much to give through God's grace.



Laura Longman Scholarship

Roger Johnson shared a note he received recently from one of the 2026 Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship Recipients.

This is Sara Van Slooten! I am writing to express my deep gratitude for receiving the Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship. Receiving an education is so important to me and this scholarship will help me greatly in paying for my schooling and get the most out of it. It is an honor to be a recipient and I will do my best to learn and work hard like Laura would have done.

Gratefully,
Sara Van Slooten

God's Masterpieces Mother

God took the fragrance of a flower...

The majesty of a tree...

The gentleness of morning dew...

The calm of a quiet sea...

The beauty of the twilight hour...

The soul of a starry night...

The laughter of a rippling brook...

The grace of a bird in flight...

Then God fashioned from these things

A creation like no other,

And when his masterpiece was through

He called it simply — Mother.

- Herbert Farnham

Father

God took the strength of a mountain,

The majesty of a tree,

The warmth of a summer sun,

The calm of a quiet sea,

The generous soul of nature,

The comforting arm of night,

The wisdom of the ages,

The power of the eagle's flight.

Then God combined all these qualities.

When there was nothing more to add,

He knew His masterpiece was complete,

And so, He called it — DAD

Reports from the Administrative Committee

Financial Update

We will be reviewing the May financial statements at our June Administrative Committee meeting which will be held on 6/23/2026. As the costs to keep up the property have grown over the years, we have not been able to pay 100% of our apportionments. The amount we have paid hit a low of about \$10,000 (during Covid) and we expect to pay around \$20,000 of the approximately \$30,000 owed in 2026. We are a connectional church, and apportionments represent our shared giving to the wider UMC. It keeps the global connection running, ensures pastors are trained and supervised, and funds large-scale humanitarian work. A substantial portion of the apportionments stays within the local Annual Conference paying for things like Clergy Support, Local Missions, and Congregational Development. Our church has been the recipient of several significant initiatives from our local Conference, helping us to remain financially viable over the last 20 years. God Bless the United Methodist Church!!

The LA County Assessor's Office requested for the first time that we fill out a Business Property Statement which includes a listing the church's property inside the building. We are unsure of how this might impact our property tax exemption.

User Group Update

Monthly payments are up to date, and we are glad to report that all past due shared use payments for utilities are now caught up. We continue researching our electricity usage so we can supply the correct documentation to the Cell Tower company in our attempt to get an increase to our electricity payment based on the higher electricity consumption of the new 5G equipment.

Facility Update

After the completion of the A/C and painting projects, we are taking a break until the fall regarding any major new work. Everyday issues continue: 1) a bad switch on the Parlor lights 2) a leaking toilet in room 5 where our Sunday School is held 3) a new pump in the Memorial Garden Fountain, etc., etc., etc.



*People lifted on the
prayer chain:*

Denise Lenore
Suzie Fisher
Mary Mackay
Mary Mackay's daughter
Karen
Ray Pyles
Valerie Aivazian
Nancy Johnson
Evelyn and Don Heim
Ken Dimmick
Kimo Guerrero
Jennifer Alderman
Ralph Bermudez
George Grengs

*Send prayer requests to
Anita Parrinello
luv2bjedi@gmail.com)
and CC Pastor Elaine
(eshinpauill@gmail.com)*





Dante Wilson as he shares his message with the children in a Sunday morning service.

Outreach Team

The Outreach Team continues to serve our church and community with grateful hearts.

The team usually meets on the first Monday of each month at 2:00 pm in the church library. All are welcome. Contact any team member with ideas or questions: Valerie Aivazian, Carol Berns, Mike Easterly, Nancy Easterly, Louis Parrinello, Nancy Summer, or Valerie Woods.

However the team is on Summer Hiatus for July and August. They will meet in September.

The 2026 United Women in Faith Reading Program

In a recent article in the UWF magazine, Response, the writer talks about how rushed our lives are.

We receive information in sound bites, rarely sitting down to read anything in depth. She says that it is a gift to be able spend time thinking slowly and deliberately about an idea. We can read a book that expresses the very same ideas we have on a subject. Other books can introduce us to a different way of looking at a particular subject and challenge our ideas. Or learn about a subject we never spent time thinking about. And as a result, we grow.

The Reading Program has books in each of 5 categories:

Education for Mission
Leadership Development
Nurturing for Community,
Social Action
Spiritual Development

Each category has novels, true stories about overcoming hardship in many forms, social justice and insight into other cultures.

The 2026 list is an extensive list with each category having 11-19 books each. Our church has a few in each category available to borrow. They are kept on a cart in the Library. If you are interested in checking any of these out, please see Margaret Cates.

After worship on two Sundays UWFaith displayed several books from previous years. About half of the books were picked up by several people! Some people are going to do a lot of reading!

Happy reading and learning!



If you shop at Ralph's you can link the church to your Ralph Rewards card. Thanks to the 22 households who have named the church to receive the rewards. The church received \$91.53 for the period March to May this year.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF CANOGA PARK

22700 Sherman Way
West Hills, CA 91307-2396

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Canoga Park, CA

Permit #1

Do you want to order a church t-shirt?

The cost of the shirt is \$20. The vendor is All Above Prints, part of AKD inc., the same company who makes the metal plates for the Memorial Rocks in the Memorial Garden, the plates for the Laura Longman Scholarship and Memorial plaques in the Narthex. We ordered a few extra t-shirts. If you would like to order one, please contact either the church office or Mike Easterly.

