



February 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](mailto:crossandflame@att.net)

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

Pastor: [eshinpaul@gmail.com](mailto:eshinpaul@gmail.com)

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

*Sunday Worship at 10:00 am*

## Heart to Heart: A Gentle Reminder

Church family,

I want to share a gentle clarification, and I'm thankful for the respectful and caring spirit you bring to our church.

In the United Methodist Church, when it comes to weddings, funerals, memorial services, and other sacred family events, there is a clear protocol that protects both the congregation and the clergy. Once a pastor has moved to a new appointment or has retired, it is the responsibility and privilege of the current appointed pastor to provide pastoral care and to officiate.

Retired clergy or former pastors are not to preside or participate in services at our church unless they have first been invited by the current pastor. Our Bishop also sent a reminder about this protocol to both active and retired clergy on October 27, 2025.

This is not simply about rules. It is about trust, healthy leadership, and avoiding confusion or divided loyalties. When we honor this boundary, we strengthen the care of the people who are here now, and we reassure the congregation that they are being cared for well in the present.

So here is the simple practice moving forward: if a retired pastor, former pastor, or any visiting clergy is contacted about doing a service or participating in worship at First Church, please direct the request to me before any plans are made. And to my clergy colleagues who remain connected to families here, thank you for your gracious care. The best next step is always to defer to the current pastor and allow me to extend an invitation if appropriate.

Thank you for helping us keep our worship life clear, peaceful, and centered. I'm grateful to serve as your pastor.

*Rev. Elaine Shin-Paull*

## Prayer for Our Nation and World

In recent weeks, many have felt fear, anger, and exhaustion as national headlines have raised hard questions about power, enforcement, and human dignity. Let me share the prayer I've been praying for our country and our world. It is on page 7.



### **Pastor**

Elaine Shin-Paull

### **Music Director/ Accompanist**

Vacant

### **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



## February Calendar

### February Birthdays

- 1 Brenda Jones  
Diane Rosales
- 6 JoAnn Chadwick-Ellis
- 11 Ayla Ann Palmerlee
- 19 Mark Nogy
- 23 Abbey Hafner-Arnold  
Shari Worrell
- 27 Margaret Cates

### No February Anniversaries

*If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, please let us know.*



### February Altar Flowers

- 1 Jodi & Kimo Guerrero in memory of Geraldine Maghakian
- 8 Michael & Miko Mosbe
- 15 Open
- 22 Open

*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.*

### Weekly Activities

- Sunday Peace Evangelical Church, Hall, 9:00 am  
Hindi Urdu Church, Sanctuary, 4:00 pm
- Monday Virtual prayer meetings: at 7:30 pm on Zoom  
Meeting ID: 898 8990 4696 Passcode: 875564  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89889904696?pwd=emhFc01lY3NTNzVkRjJEWCTmZndiUT09>
- Tuesday Church of Christ, Fellowship Hall, 6:00-10:00 pm  
Men's AA Step Guide, Room # 10, 7:00 pm
- Wednesday Men's AA Group (Learning to Live), Parlor, 7:00 - 9:00 pm
- Thursday Bible Study is taking a month-long break in January  
Wesleyan Bible Study, Library, 11:00 am,  
Narcotics Anonymous (Recovery Zone), Parlor 7:00 pm
- Friday Church of Christ, Hall & Lounge, 6-10 pm
- Saturday Narcotics Anon. (Sharing from the Heart), Parlor, 9:30 am

### Other Activities

- Sunday 1 Outreach Committee Meeting, 11:15 am
- Saturday 7 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 8:30 am  
*Frank's Weiler's Deli, 21161 Victory Blvd., Canoga Park*  
YALA Fellowship Hall, 12:30 pm
- Sunday 8 Receiving new members  
Laity Sunday
- Tuesday 10 Administrative Committee Meeting, 6:30 pm, Library
- Saturday 14 Valentine's Day
- Monday 16 President's Day
- Tuesday 17 Lunar New Year
- Wednesday 18 Ash Wednesday:  
*On Ash Wednesday, we will offer Ashes To Go, as we did last year. We will have a table set up on Sherman Way, and you are welcome to drive by or walk up for a brief moment of prayer and the imposition of ashes. Come as you are, even if you are on your way to work or school. All are welcome.*
- Saturday 21 YALA, Fellowship Hall, 12:30 pm

### Coming In March

- Saturday 7 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 8:30 am  
*Frank's Weiler's Deli, 21161 Victory Blvd., Canoga Park*
- Saturday 7 YALA, Fellowship Hall, 12:30 pm
- Sunday 8 Daylight Savings Time begins
- Sunday 29 Palm Sunday  
*Congregation assembles the Blessing Bags after worship*



## Cal-Pac Midwinter Event

Is being held at Claremont UMC on February 21, 2026 from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm. Discussion Theme is "Justice for Women, Children and Youth: Justice is Love in Action". David & Margaret Youth and Family Services and our UWFaith National Mission Institution in LaVerne will be highlighted. Registration is \$25.00 and is due February 12, 2026.

## UWFaith Assembly

is being held May 15-17, 2026 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Focus will be on the theme "Dream it! Believe it! Do it!"

You can sign up now at

<https://assembly.uwfaith.org/ereg/newreg.php?eventid=821058&>

## Cal-Pac UWFaith

The 53rd Annual Celebration was held October 18 where 100 United Women in Faith gathered at First United Methodist Church of North Hollywood. At the Celebration it was also a time to remember and honor many in our lives through the lighting of the Candle of Commitment. The Candle burned for three hours and 13 minutes, this represented \$3,196.08 given toward the Conference Pledge to Mission at \$16.56 per minute..the per minute cost of operating United Women in Faith nationally. Canoga Park's submission for the Candle of Commitment was in memory of Elizabeth Rogers.

## Breath as Prayer

From the book *Breath as Prayer* by Jennifer Tucker, which I purchased recently.

## Breathe Deep and Know

You can let go of the burdens you're holding. You can trust God to take care of you. The truth is, no amount of worry ever does us any good. We may feel like we are taking action when we worry, but worrying has never solved a problem, predicted an outcome or calmed a heavy heart. In fact, worry often leads to anxiety, which activates our stress response and deregulates our bodies.

Shirley Thomson



*Confirm gatherings  
before you go.*

### Bookends

Wednesday,  
February 18 at 1:00 pm  
Book to be reviewed TBA

### Sarah Circle

Thursday,  
February 12 at 9:15 am  
for breakfast at Nico's  
Restaurant

### Faith, Hope & Love

Wednesday,  
February 11 at 1:00 pm  
Church Library



*Spirit of Love banner*



# Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship Ministry

## 2026 Season is in Process

This February is filled with anniversaries and memories for the friends and family of the Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship. It was 47 years ago this month that Laura, age 20, drove herself to St Joseph's Hospital in Burbank because she was having difficulty breathing. She had had the flu since before Christmas of 1978. She was admitted and diagnosed with cardiomyopathy. Later that year she received an experimental heart transplant at Stanford University Medical Center. It was like "putting a new engine in a very tired old car."

She returned to a very active life with her new heart. Since her childhood she had loved to be learning. She entered San Francisco State University as a junior studying Biochemistry. On February 9th of 1984, Laura sent valentine cards to her friends and family. None of those cards had return addresses on them. She knew that her heart was failing. Laura, then a senior, died in class of heart failure on February 10th, 1984.

The Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship was founded as a living memorial to Laura and to help other students finish their bachelor's degree. On Easter Sunday, 1985 the first scholarship grants were awarded. By April 2025 \$212,500 had been awarded in 127 scholarship grants given to 98 different students. More memories of Laura are shown in a video presentation on the church website: [www.umccp.org](http://www.umccp.org).

Applications for the 2026 season were distributed in December 2025 and January 2026. Applicants will return their completed applications by February 19, 2026. After the review process recipients will be chosen and presented with their Scholarship awards on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026.

Since the inception of the Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship, families have chosen to



make contributions in memory of their loved one or in honor of someone. This month we are encouraging interested people to contribute in support of the 2026 recipients, yet to be chosen. All donations are dedicated to fund scholarship grants.

Anyone who would like to contribute to this ministry in memory or honor of a loved one is invited to write a check payable to the First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park with the memo line reading "Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship." Please include a note of dedication to your loved one or honoree. All donations and gifts are dedicated for use in this ministry. Your gifts are very much appreciated and will be acknowledged for your tax purposes.

The Laura Longman Memorial Scholarship is a memorial ministry of the First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park, 22700 Sherman Way, West Hills, CA 91307.

*Roger and Nancy Johnson*

# Reports from the Administrative Committee

## Stewardship as a lifestyle

At the end of the year, we received a couple of additional Estimate of Giving Cards which moved our program totals over \$100,000. Thank you again for your generosity!!

## Financial Update

**DOLLARS & SENSE** We will be reviewing and approving the 2026 Budget at the 1/20/2026 Administrative Committee meeting. With the addition of the new Chaminade lease for the downstairs Fellowship Hall, we are showing a very strong financial picture! We'll have some notes regarding the 2025 YE statement next month.

## Facility Update

We've decided to wait until sometime in the future when the monitors are taken down for repair or replacement to address the termites. There isn't enough room immediately behind the monitors to properly do the heat treatment we were considering.

Ants, Ants, Ants.....we treated them again near the driveway and over by the Education Buildings. The last wood sprinkler valve box (which are susceptible to subterranean termites) was replaced with a plastic box. Additional wood chips were delivered and will be spread in mid-January. All building roofs will be cleaned of debris and leaves to reduce any puddling/leaks. Many Thanks to All Volunteers!!

## User Group Update

In early February we'll need a crew to clean the downstairs Fellowship Hall and remove or store items in preparation for Chaminade's arrival starting February 15. They will be using the gym for their wrestling team practice. We continue to work with the transition for our user groups - Young Ambassador's Leadership Academy, Rockchippers, Peace Evangelical Christian Church, and Church of Christ as the Fellowship Hall will not be available to them after February 14th.



*Remember to bring food for  
the West Valley Food  
Pantry  
on Communion Sundays.*



Ralphs: The September to November quarter had 18 church families participating in the Ralphs Community Rewards Program. We received a donation of \$75.50 for education purposes.

# Outreach Committee

The Outreach/Mission Committee is happy to announce we now have committee members. They are: Valerie Aivasian, Carol Berns, Mike Easterly, Nancy Easterly, Nancy Summer, Valerie Woods and Shari Worrell. We held our first meeting on January 4, 2026. We created a Calendar of Events which is below. Our next meeting will be held Sunday, February 1st, after the worship service, in Room 10. Anyone interested in becoming a member of the team or attending a meeting please let the

Committee's Chairperson, Shari Worrell, know at sharikworrell@gmail.com.

For those who would like to contribute to our Outreach/Mission projects please make your check payable to the First United Methodist Church (FUMCCP) with a memo designating the Outreach Committee. One hundred percent of all donations are used for the committee's projects. The Outreach/Mission team thanks you in advance for your support.

## Outreach Calendar

Weekly – 1. Kids Bulletins/Crayons

2. Send cards to those who haven't attended a worship service for a while.

Monthly - Bulletins and a letter sent to Shut-Ins via snail mail the first of the month

As needed – Outreach is involved with:

1. Welcoming gift for new members
2. Laity Sunday
3. Children's Sunday
4. Greeting

February – Valentine's Day

Give a treat to the shelters and church's children

March/ April - Lent – Blessing Bags – **Coming Soon**

1. Congregation makes donations for Blessing Bags as our Lenten Project.
2. Congregation assembles in Parlor on Palm Sunday after the worship service

April – Easter Egg Hunt

The last two years has been coordinated by the Anderson family

May – Mothers' Day

A treat for our church's mothers

June – Fathers' Day

A treat for our church's fathers

September – Back to School

October – Halloween - Trunk or Treat

Our first year was coordinated by Michael Mosbe

November/December – Advent

1. Advent calendars, \$25 Gift cards and a stocking with treats for the shelters' residents
2. Advent calendars and a stocking with treats for our church's children

*"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."*

*1 John: 4-11*

## Pastor Elaine's Prayer

God of justice and mercy,

We lift up our country to You. Bring peace in our streets and wisdom in our leadership. Let truth be known, investigations be honest, and accountability be real.

We pray for communities living in fear, and for all who feel targeted, powerless, or unheard. We grieve every life lost, and we ask You to comfort those who mourn.

Lord, guard our hearts and our institutions from cruelty. Where there has been excessive force, stop it. Where there has been injustice, expose it and correct it. Shape every law enforcement agency, including ICE, to act with restraint, transparency, and respect for human dignity.

Make us a people who do not harden our hearts. Teach us to pursue justice without hatred, and peace without silence. And send us out as Your people, to live with humility, courage, and love.

In Jesus' name, Amen

*Rev. Elaine Shin-Paull*

## Message from Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

The one year anniversary of the fires in LA, in the Pacific Palisades and in Altadena reminds us of all our conference, our world, and our community was changed by those fires.

And we want you to know that we haven't forgotten those who lost homes, those who lost loved ones, those who lost churches, and neighborhoods and towns. We haven't forgotten you.

And as the church, we are here to be with you into the future and to continue to walk alongside of you as you find new ways to live your life, even in new communities. Our prayers are with you, our support is for you. And we as a conference are continuing to walk alongside all of those who suffered the most.

So especially in the coming days, I pray that you would lift up, in whatever community you're in, lift up the community Church of Pacific Palisades, United Methodist Church that burned and also Altadena United Methodist Church, the church that burned as well. And all the people associated with them, and all those who lost their homes. Lift them up in prayer.

And if you know someone who lost something during that fire, reach out to them and let them know you remember this date. God is with us. And sometimes that's the best we can hope for. Just that God is with us. I'm praying for you.

As of December 2025, Cal-Pac received nearly 1.5 million dollars in donations from around the world, including \$85,000 in gift cards. Now, in addition to on the ground support, UMCOR has awarded a grant of \$624,000 to Cal-Pac for ongoing recovery in our area.



*People lifted on the  
prayer chain:*

*Family of Mary Beth  
Godwin*

*Laurie Berger*

*JoAnn Chadwick-Ellis*

*Ken Dimmick*

*Lori Dimmick*

*Tammy Cates Palmerlee*

*Dana Dreyfuss*

*The Mountford Family*

*Mark Nogy*

*Larry Abrams*

*Sharon Aivazian*

*The Krane Family*

*Betty Phillippi Family*

*Kathy Borisoff*

*Denise Lenore*

*Our Church*

*Send prayer requests to*

*Anita Parrinello*

*luv2bjedi@gmail.com)*

*and CC Pastor Elaine*

*(eshinpaull@gmail.com)*







FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF CANOGA PARK

22700 Sherman Way  
West Hills, CA 91307-2396

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Canoga Park, CA  
Permit #1

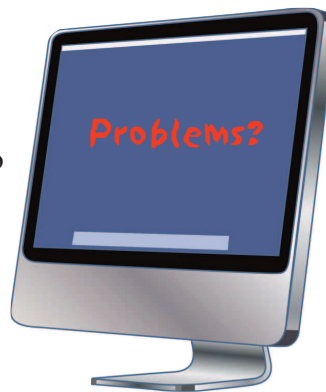
**Return Service Requested**

## Edwin's Computer Ministry

If you're having problems with your computer and would like someone to look at it (for free) please contact me. Edwin works in the IT department at Valterra Products, where I used to work and has gladly looked at several computers for the church and church members.

He doesn't come to your house, he just connects to your computer through the internet on the third Saturday of each month between 9-11am. Joe Dedinas was the last member that had great success improving his ability to connect with others.

If you or your computer need help, please give me a call and I'll schedule you in!



*George Grengs,  
george.grengs@outlook.com or 818.632.7538*