



August 2026

The Courier

First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park

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Pastor: eshinpaull@gmail.com

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

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am

Heart to Heart

At our Annual Conference in La Quinta, California — the gathering of United Methodist churches from across Southern California, Hawaii, and Guam where we conduct the business of our denomination together. I come home from these gatherings most years quietly grateful for the work of the church. This year I came home with something heavier on my heart — and I want to share it with you.

A resolution came to the floor that I could not stay silent about.

The resolution called on the conference to formally endorse the Kairos Palestine II document, titled “A Moment of Truth: Faith in a Time of Genocide,” issued by Palestinian Christians in November 2025. It characterized the situation in Gaza as a “genocidal assault” and described conditions in the West Bank as “ethnic cleansing.” It urged all United Methodist clergy and congregations throughout Southern California, Hawaii, and Guam to study the document and carry its advocacy into their churches. The resolution made no mention of the October 7, 2023 Hamas attacks, in which approximately 1,200 Israeli civilians were murdered and over 200 taken hostage. It made no mention of Hamas, Hezbollah, or Iranian involvement. It did not affirm Israel’s right to exist. And it used the word “genocide” as settled fact — despite the International Court of Justice having explicitly not made that legal determination, with a final ruling not expected before 2029 at the earliest.

It used language I believe was one-sided and incomplete. It spoke about the suffering of one people while saying nothing about the suffering of another. As your pastor — as someone who has spent her ministry believing that every human being bears the image of God — I walked to the microphone.

I proposed amendments. I asked that the legally and politically contested terms “genocide,” “apartheid,” and “ethnic cleansing” be replaced with language describing the humanitarian crisis without prejudging determinations that international courts have not yet made. I asked that the resolution acknowledge the October 7 attacks, the Israeli hostages, and the ongoing trauma of Israeli civilians. I asked that the conference reaffirm Israel’s right to exist — consistent with longstanding United Methodist Church position. And I asked that the study guide recommendation be broadened to include Jewish, Israeli, and diverse Christian perspectives, rather than a single advocacy document.

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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



August

Birthdays

- 1st Wren Grant
- 15th Tim O'Connor
Jyl Lawrence
- 20th Nick Aiani
- 29th Jennifer Alderman

Anniversaries

- 4th Ken and Lori
Dimmick
- 27th Don and Evelyn
Heim

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



August Altar Flowers

- 2 Lori & Ken Dimmick
- 9 Micko & Michael Mosbe
- 16 Open
- 23 Open
- 30 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.

My amendments drew nearly a third of the vote in a room where most resolutions pass unanimously. They failed. The original resolution passed as written.

I want you to know why I did it — and it is not because I am a political person. I did it because I am a pastor, and pastors are called to tell the whole truth even when it is costly. I did it because silence in the face of incompleteness is not neutrality — it is a choice. And I did it because my faith will not allow me to grieve selectively.

The church is not always right. Denominations are not always right. What we are called to is faithfulness — to Scripture, to conscience, and to the God who loves all people without exception.

I am grateful to be your pastor. I am grateful for the courage this congregation gives me simply by being who you are.

If you have questions or want to talk further, my door is always open.

*In faith and love,
Rev. Elaine*

This Summer: Creatures & Creator

The Animals That Tell God's Story

July 19 – August 30

Have you ever noticed how many animals appear in Scripture — and how much they have to say?

This summer we are embarking on a seven-week journey through the Bible's most memorable creatures. From the serpent in the Garden to the animals of the Psalms and beyond, we will discover that God has been speaking through the animal kingdom from the very first pages of Scripture — and that these creatures carry some of the Bible's deepest truths about who we are and who God is.

Each week we will slow down, look closely at the original Hebrew, and let these ancient stories surprise us all over again.

Join us every Sunday through August 30. Bring your curiosity — and perhaps your favorite animal lover.

Rev. Elaine Shin-Paull

August Church Calendar

Aug. 1 Men's Breakfast – 8:30-10:30

Weiler's West Hills Deli, 21161 Victory Blvd., Canoga Park

Aug. 8 Don Heim's Memorial Service, 11:00

Gates Kingsley Gates, 6909 Canoga Ave, Canoga Park

Aug. 11 Administrative Committee Meeting, 6:30pm-8:30pm, Library

Aug. 16 Aloha Sunday

Aug. 23 Mission to Costa Rica Meeting, Library after Worship



UWF Mission Team:

Date to be determined in August

Future Meetings:

North District Annual Celebration

Simi Valley UMC on September 19 from 10:00am – 2:00pm

Cal- Pac Conference Annual Celebration

will be held at Laguna Country UMC on October 17 from 9:00am– 2:00pm

UWF Resource Center.

Closed as of June 30. Future print resources will be available on Amazon.

Shirley Thomson



*Confirm gatherings
before you go.*

Bookends

Wednesday, August 19
1:00 pm
in Room 10

Sarah Circle

Thursday, August 13 at
9:15 am at Nico's
Restaurant
7166 Shoup Ave,
West Hills,

Faith, Hope & Love
no meeting in August



Laura Longman Scholarship

*Laura Longman
1958 -1984*



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

Do not pass by on the other side of the street, but be an example of love and charity for everyone, like the Good Samaritan of whom Jesus spoke.

Luke 10:25-37



Aloha Sunday

will be celebrated on August 16.

Join our choir in the spirit of Aloha! Dust off your favorite Hawaiian shirt, muumuu, or lei, and bring your most colorful outfit and your most joyful attitude. Come celebrate with island spirit as we lift our voices in worship together!

Pet-Family Blessing

will be held on Sunday, August 30

As part of our summer sermon series, *Creatures & Creator: The Animals That Tell God's Story*, we will end our last Sunday of the sermon series to bless our pet-families! Bring your pet's best photo — we'll display them together and lift them up in prayer, so it's just like they're right there with us in worship.

Church Directory

Our updated church directory is now available for our church family! If you haven't picked up your copy yet, please do so soon. As it contains contact information for our church family, we ask that you handle it carefully and refrain from sharing it outside our congregation. Thank you for helping us protect one another's privacy!



Backpack Day

On Sunday July 26, backpacks were presented to all children who came to church. Then the younger set had fun on a water slide, pool and in a bounce house (which they did not want to leave) as their parents observed.



Bingo Game Day at church

On July 5th, right after Sunday worship, our Outreach and Family Ministry teams joined forces for a festive Bingo celebration marking the 250th anniversary of our nation! Thirty-three church family and friends stayed to enjoy an afternoon of fun, prizes, and great food. It was a wonderful reminder that community, joy, and celebration are at the heart of who we are as a church family.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who organized, volunteered, and played along. What a joyful way to worship and celebrate together!



Be a Part of the Mission!

August 13-21, 2027

Join Nancy and Mike Easterly as they go, love, serve and make a difference in the lives of others through Christ.

Reserve Sunday, August 23, after church and refreshments to meet with Nancy, Mike and another former mission team member. Learn about Costa Rica, the Costa Rica Mission Project, and the projects in support of the Methodist Church. Mission Trip Details - Accommodations - Costs Weather - Food - Activities - Fun-Day - 'Being Church'



Michel and Nancy Easterly will go on the Mission Trip to Costa Rica, and invite you to join them.

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.

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
Herbert Farnham



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.

Reports from the Administrative Committee

Financial Update:

We reviewed our 1st half 2026 financial statements at the last Administrative Committee meeting. Our finances look very stable at this point with the Jan-June Profit and Loss statement showing a positive \$3300 over our original budgeted numbers. A motion passed to remove the excess earnings from our Endowment Fund investments, which totals close to \$9,000. The use of the Endowment Fund principal cannot be touched without a vote of the church members, but the investment earnings can be used for the budget or designated funds as decided by the Administrative Committee. In this case we are moving the money to the Capital Fund as we started building reserves for larger Capital projects like the resurfacing of the parking lot. With the addition of this money, we will have about \$35,000 in our Capital Fund.

Facility Update:

As noted in the last Courier, the summer is a slow period for any major facility projects, but we continue to work on small maintenance items. Louis Parrinello was able to identify a loose latch on the main double doors to the sanctuary and resecure the plate so that the double doors now close and lock securely. We plan to put the little church sprinkler valve cover up on bricks to stop termite infestations. In mid-July, Chaminade notified us of excessive water pressure that might damage their new drinking water dispenser. It was evaluated and found that the Fellowship Hall water regulator needed replacement. It's a large one – 2", which cost around \$1200 just for the regulator. Jeff Leighton made the repair – total cost about \$1800. Roger Johnson is volunteering his electrical expertise to help us identify the problem with our Parlor light switches. The list goes on and on!

User Group Update:

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. Removing all user group dead storage on campus has become a priority starting with the items from the Boy Scout Troop that disbanded. There are some items left in their old room, some in an upstairs Fellowship Hall storage room and more stuff behind the pre-school in an old storage room connected to the outbuildings near the alley. We are also talking to the Woodland Hills Theater Group about removing their storage container near the trash bins. There will be more updates on this in future Couriers.

George Grengs



*People lifted on the
prayer chain:*

Ken Dimmick
Lori Dimmick
Chandra's sister Sherry
Carol Berns
Valerie Aivazian
Tammy Cates
Tamara Anderson
Doran Cates
PJ Umphries
Tim and Lora O'Connor
Jennifer Alderman
Ralph Bermudez
Kimo Guerrero

Special prayers for
Evelyn Heim
on the passing of
Don Heim on July 23

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





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.

