

# PILGRIM CONGREGATIONALIST



Sharing the Good News of Mission Hills United Church of Christ  
*An Open and Affirming Congregation*

May 2023

## Happy Eastertide

Worship planners always have to be looking forward a month or two, so even though we are just a few weeks past Easter, it seems like ancient history. Just like if you tell me something about my sermon on Tuesday, I will have forgotten what I said because I'm on to the next one. So, I want to pause and remember a few of the special moments this past Holy Week and Easter.

1. Our first palm procession down Fort Stockton with the United Methodist Church was a wonderful joyous event made even more special with the presence of the disciples and Jesus. I called out Happy Palm Sunday to a man on the sidewalk who had to wait for us to pass by. He turned to his friend and asked, "What's that?" Hopefully he learned something that day.
2. We added an optional foot washing to an already meaning-full Maundy Thursday service. It was a brand-new experience for some who found it unnervingly and compellingly powerful. It's always when we turn out all the lights at the end that gets me, especially when we start singing *Were You There* in the dark. Oh, and when Andrew Bowen played that song on the sax at the end of Palm Sunday. Chills.
3. We were back with the United Methodists for 6:30 am Easter Sunrise at Pioneer Park. There were 35 from our two churches. It felt good to see the dog walkers curious about what was going on in the middle of the park. Maybe next year they'll come back – with their dogs of course.
4. And all the brass and organ on Easter and the always-needed message of hope and renewal through Word and Sacrament... but adding to the traditional elements, this year the children began the service with a reenactment of Mary at the Empty Tomb. They brought another level of joy for us as they discovered the story.
5. Of course, their big excitement was (patiently?) waiting after worship when they could search for the 400 candy-filled eggs hidden across the second floor by the youth group. We were glad to be joined by 8 kids and their parents from the neighborhood to make for a total of 39 kids and youth at church on Easter. Christ is Risen!

There are many people to thank including James Roth for his decorating, Dave Sommer for directing the pageant, Artcel for involving the children, Fiona and the youth group for their egg duties as well as serving as liturgists and cup-bearers, Bruce Mattias for

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Happy Eastertide (continued)

organizing the Palm Sunday disciples, David Jay for organizing the foot washing, Elizabeth for producing lots of extra services, Saige and Trevor for keeping the slides and streaming going, and of course Angelica and the choir and Kris and the brass for truly exceptional music. There were many other details that involved many of you – so thank you for a memorable Holy Week and Easter. I'll actually remember it!

*Blessings, David*

## Moderator Message

I have always somehow liked the sound of the word *penultimate* which means second to last. I realize this is my penultimate message I will be writing to church members as moderator. I will save the retrospective comments and much needed thank-yous for the June edition of the PC, but I will note now that this almost year period of time has flown by quickly and I feel fortunate to have been able to serve the church and its community during this time. What I want to do here is look ahead a bit and mention a number of exciting things happening with MHUCC.

I think most all of us feel happy to be part of MHUCC and proud of its values of inclusion for all and concern for issues facing our world here and now including social justice and climate change. The big question is how to we communicate who we are and what we do to the larger community outside the church? Our updated website and our livestreamed services provide valuable outreach but other options are being explored now and in the near future as well. We will be having promotional advertisements (along with a QR code to provide further church information) in the performance programs for both the San Diego Gay Men's Chorus and the San Diego Women's Chorus this year. Through connections with the Mission Hills Town Council, Pastor David was able to get a greatly reduced price for church sponsorship of the children's activity zone for the upcoming Mission Hills Summer Concert Series. What a great way this will be to get our name and who we are out to the greater community.

Our current church governance structure dates back to the 1950's. It is indeed impressive that it has lasted through approaching 70 years. However, much has changed during that time and a hard working team is looking at how we can get more nimble and operate more effectively and efficiently in the coming years. We heard some new ideas at the April Church Council meeting and will be hearing more in the months to come. Importantly, final ideas for a better governance structure will involve input and ideas from as many of the church community as possible. There will be Congregational briefing on the proposed new structure after the church service on Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup> and Sunday May 14<sup>th</sup>. I hope as many people as possible will attend these meetings and provide needed ideas towards church governance structure and operations.

We can all be glad that our lengthy stretch of winter weather finally seems to be behind us and we are able to enjoy some spring weather that San Diego is known for. My artichoke plants have grown sky high due to all the rain we've received and I am hoping the tomatoes do equally well with warmer weather arriving.

*I wish you all God's blessings during May and beyond, Carol*

## Monthly Mission Partner - Just In Time



Just in Time is a local organization that helps transition age youth (18-26) who are leaving the foster care system achieve self-sufficiency and well-being by inviting them to join a reliable, responsive and real Community that helps them become confident, capable and connected.

***This month MHUCC will learn about the successes and challenges of this work as well as ways to volunteer and to donate.***

## Fellowship is inviting you to a soccer game



The Wave is playing at Snapdragon Stadium  
**Friday, May 26 at 7 PM**

We will order tickets as soon as we have some responses. We'd love us all to be able to sit together. Tickets will be \$15-20. The Wave has been playing amazing and it will be exciting to see the new Snapdragon Stadium!

*Please let Anne Reichman know if you are interested: [gammalan@aol.com](mailto:gammalan@aol.com)*

## Church Reorganization

As reported in March, a reorganization task force has been looking at ways to restructure our church governance and ministries with the goal of involving more people in meaningful ways requiring fewer meetings. The task force (Karen DeLaurier, Jon Pettis, Jere McInerney and Pat Wahlen) shared their preliminary thoughts on a broad concept with Council on April 19 and received enthusiastic support. We now welcome input from members of the congregation and to that end have scheduled two gatherings/briefings on **May 7 and 14** following Sunday services. Please join us in the Commons to learn more and contribute to our hopeful future!

*~ Pat Wahlen*

## New Members

If you are ready to formally join MHUCC, we will receive new members on **Sunday, May 14**. Please speak with Pastor David. We will have another session for inquirers soon.

# SUNDAY SCHOOL

Thank You!

A huge thank you to the many volunteers who made Easter 2023 so memorable! The Easter Pageant and the Easter Egg Hunt events would not have been possible without the generous efforts of so many volunteers, leaders, staff, the Easter Bunny, and the youth!



Thank you to those who donated plastic eggs and candies. The youth stuffed the eggs with candies and had a great time hiding the eggs from room to room upstairs. Almost 30 (!) young kids came – ours and from the Mission Hills community. What a blessing!

Of course, we cannot forget Palm Sunday where our children and youth started our service with a great song.



Finally, Parents' Night Out as usual was fun. They had dinner, made key chains and bracelets, and created a play on our own.

## Branching out – MHUCC Youth Group Service Project in Sacramento, June 18—24



The MHUCC youth group has a long tradition of summer service trips organized by the Sierra Service Project. Groups have participated in well-established programs with the Navajo Nation in Tsaile, Arizona, and Del Norte County in Northern California. But this year, the Sierra Service Project is doing something different; they are branching out. And our group is honored to be the first participants in a new program.

Our Youth Group will be in Sacramento June 18-24. We address the pockets of need that lie hidden in neighborhoods and suburbs of cities just like ours, often due to systematic differences in resourcing, city planning, and gentrification. Our service trip will provide an opportunity for our youth to make a difference installing drought-tolerant landscapes and carrying out essential home repairs for low-income residents. They will learn about the causes of urban poverty in these historically underserved communities and reflect on the value of civic engagement. They will also enjoy free time, the opportunity to explore our state capital, and water-based activities along the American River.

Please contact Youth Group Leader [Fiona Case](#) for more information.



*MHUCC —Sierra Service Project 2017*

## MHUCC Scholarships

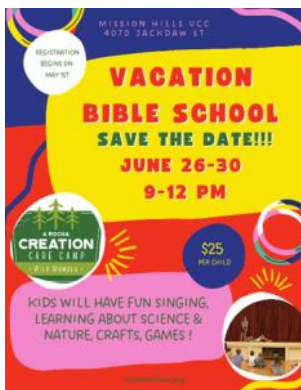


Now is the time to prepare your application for the Mission Hills United Church of Christ College Scholarship. Members of the church who are planning to attend college this fall are eligible to receive this scholarship. You may pick up a copy of the application at the church office, or [online](#).

**The church office must receive applications no later than May 15, 2023.**

For more information, please contact Suzanne Albrecht ([suz1127@cox.net](mailto:suz1127@cox.net)).

## Vacation Bible School



Save the Date!!

Vacation Bible School is coming June 26 - 30th.  
The week-long camp will run 9am-12pm.

Mark your calendar now and spread the word!

**Registration begins on May 1.**

*All are welcome.*

The kids will have fun singing, learning about science & nature, doing crafts and playing games!

## Youth Group Upcoming Events

We have proposed a number of possible **activities in May specifically for 6th-8th grade youth** (middle school), these include:

- Caring for animals at the Friends of Cats shelter in El Cajon. Saturday May 6.
- Caring for our environment at the Friends of Rose Creek Native Plant Work Party. Saturday May 13.
- Caring for our neighbors at either a Friday or Saturday Afternoon Food Sorting at Feeding San Diego Distribution Center
- Jumping for joy at the trampoline center (with the Sunday School), Sunday May 20.

If your middle schooler is interested in one or more of these activities please vote in the survey and provide your contact email (survey linked on our [webpage](#)). We will organize the two most popular events.

## All UCC Read

Prior to General Synod this summer, all UCC churches are being invited to read *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X Kendi. Our last read was *Evicted* by Matthew Desmond – highly recommended! MHUCC Faith Formation Ministry encourages you to participate. You can read the book on your own or if you would like to read and discuss along the way, we will have three Tuesday evening Zoom sessions in May culminating with an all-Partnership event to commemorate Juneteenth to wrap up our individual churches reading. We have five copies you can borrow or it is easily accessible at libraries or Amazon.

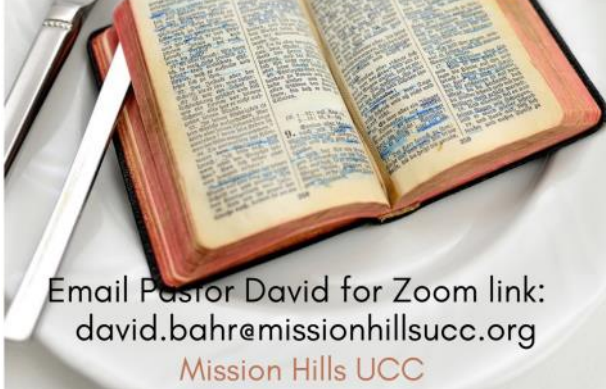
Join us on [Zoom](#) on Tuesday May 9, 16, and 23.

## Confirmation

Zoe Merrick completed everything required to be confirmed in 2020. And then Covid happened. Before our current confirmation class is confirmed on June 11, we will have a special ceremony for Zoe on Sunday, May 14.

# Lunch & Lectionary

THURSDAYS @ NOON VIA ZOOM



Email Pastor David for Zoom link:  
[david.bahr@missionhillsucc.org](mailto:david.bahr@missionhillsucc.org)

Mission Hills UCC

## Sunday 10 am Worship Service

Please join us for worship in person or watch our livestream on [Facebook](#) and our [YouTube](#) Channel.

A bulletin link is emailed at 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays and posted on [Facebook](#) Sunday morning if you wish to follow along.

On Mondays you can find closed caption video on our [website](#) and [YouTube](#).

## May Birthdays

- May 2** Glenn Dunham
- May 10** Tina Stallone  
Vic Van Lint
- May 11** Georgia Rickert  
Leo Stallone
- May 12** Fiona Case
- May 15** Rilla Baxter
- May 18** Jinx Jay  
David Quiñones
- May 19** Daniel Antos
- May 20** Eric Fox
- May 21** Diane Edwards
- May 25** Laurie Halgren  
Laura Borschel
- May 26** Dianne Ramet
- May 28** Mark Pyeatte



Please contact the church office with corrections or additions to the birthday list.



## Meeting Minutes

In order to enhance communication with the Congregation, here is a link to the minutes of the March Church Council Meeting:

<https://missionhillsucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/March15Council.pdf>

## History Corner

Many of you know the story of our first church building, the “redwood chapel,” built in 1911. (pictured below) The First Congregational Church of San Diego had resolved that there should be a church in the new Mission Hills subdivision. With the support of the Southern California Congregational Conference, they commissioned an architect, Emmor Brooke Weaver, who provided plans for a small board and batten Arts and Crafts building. With the labor of the men of First Church, the building was completed in one week. Weaver was associated with the William Hebbard and Irving Gill architectural firm, a very well-know firm in Southern California. Weaver designed approximately 50 buildings in the San Diego area, including Ramona Castle, now known as Mt. Woodson Castle. As you can see in the photos below, his buildings ranged from the simplest arts and crafts design to a flamboyant castle.



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Sexton	Gloria Schacht		
Sunday Nursery	Gloria Schacht & Jianna Ruiz		

*General information*

[info@missionhillsucc.org](mailto:info@missionhillsucc.org)

*News subscriptions & submissions (due on the 20th)*

[news@missionhillsucc.org](mailto:news@missionhillsucc.org)

**Church Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30 am - 3:30 pm**