

# PILGRIM CONGREGATIONALIST



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

September 2023

## Welcome Home

In the little town in North Dakota where I went to school, homecoming was a big deal. People “came home” for a big football game with a rival team, a big pep rally, and a dance at the fire hall – no it wasn’t Lake Wobegon but we spoke each other’s language! Not only a school event, Homecoming was a community celebration of being back together.

I like to think of the Sunday after Labor Day as a community celebration of being back together too. Summer travels are over, school is in session, and in the church, “the program year” starts. The youth have regathered. The choir is back. And adult studies begin.

Our Sunday service on September 10 will incorporate guest trumpeters accompanying the organ, the first choral anthem of the year, and the children will present the gospel story of the Wedding Banquet as a play, like last year’s Good Samaritan. So, join us for Homecoming Sunday! Invite a friend who may want to make Mission Hills UCC their home too.

## Blessing of the Animals

We will regather in the parking lot on Saturday, October 7 to bless the animal members of our families. Join us at 10 am with your companions and invite a friend with theirs. If anyone would like to help that day, or plan, please let me know.



## All Generations Weekend at Pilgrim Pines

Many people have warm memories of church camp but it may have been a while. Others have never been to or even heard of Pilgrim Pines. Pilgrim Pines is our UCC camp near Yucaipa in the shadow of the San Bernardino mountains – about two hours away. When we had focus

*(Continued on page 2)*

### **Pastor's Message (continued)**

groups last year to build a foundation for our ministry with children, youth, and families, we heard loud and clear that people wanted to do a family camp again and so we booked the camp and the date is coming soon.

Our theme will be telling stories. It will be a meaningful time of sharing along with vespers and Sunday worship. We'll also have all kinds of fun including smores around the firepit and a talent/no talent show.

You can come up on Friday and stay through Sunday morning, or you can arrive Saturday morning and stay one night, or you can just come for Saturday. It's all the same price - \$135 per person. However, we don't want cost to be a factor in deciding to participate, so we are offering a maximum cost of \$150 per family. Individuals can pay on a sliding scale from \$65 to \$135.

### **Podcast**

For those who wish, my sermons are now accessible by reading my blog, watching on YouTube, and listening to a new podcast called Sermons from San Diego. You can find it wherever you get your podcasts or on our church website under "sermons."

### **Recapping This Fall**

Homecoming Sunday and Parent's Night Out and Book Study and Youth Group at the Food Bank and New Bylaws and Animal Blessing and Hymns and Beer and Partnership Picnic and Pilgrim Pines and Pumpkin Carving. And that's just through October. And doesn't mention Choir, Lunch and Lectionary, Worship, Feeding Mission Hills, Knitting 2 Give, World Communion Sunday, and more. Oh, and Seven Friends will start signs up again soon, too. Lots of ways to deepen faith, deepen relationships, and find meaningful ways to serve.

*Many blessings,  
Pastor David*

### **New Governance and Ministry Structure**

A task force of the Church Council has continued to make progress is proposing a new way to organize MHUCC with more people involved in ministry with fewer meetings and a less formal structure. We had congregational briefings in May and have continued to refine our plans. Come to our briefing following worship on **September 3** to learn more. The task force is now working on revising our bylaws to conform with the new plan. You will receive the revised bylaws in September for a projected congregational meeting in October.

## Moderator Message

You may have realized by now that my moderator's message each month is a reflection of my personal experiences at Mission Hills UCC. Each of these has brought me great joy, satisfaction, and most of all, a closer relationship to other members of Mission Hills UCC. This month I'd like to share my memories of 7 Friends.

The first year I said "Yes" to Linda Sommer when she asked me to come with their group for lunch. It was their last gathering for the year. I'd just joined the church.

I knew no one in the group and that's always challenging. But I was welcomed immediately and spent a wonderful couple of hours learning about my new friends, sharing a bit about me, and enjoying a great Vietnamese meal.

I've been in a 7 Friends group each year since then. In fact, our group from a couple of years ago recently reunited for a potluck to bid farewell to the Compton's before they left for Colorado.

During one of last year's group activities I became better acquainted with a long time member of the church. I never really knew her although I'd seen her at church every Sunday. Now I connect with her each week on a different level. All because of 7 Friends.

I encourage you to join me in saying "yes" this year when Linda asks us to join 7 Friends. Whether you have recently joined our church community or you have been with us for years, I promise you will discover new places, new people, and have new experiences which will enrich your life.

*Love and blessings,  
Jere*

## Youth Group Upcoming Events

- **Saturday, September 16 from 12:30-2:30 pm:** volunteer at the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank Warehouse. To sign up please contact [Elizabeth](#) (only **12** spots open).
- **October 20 – 22:** MHUCC All Generations Weekend at [Pilgrim Pines](#).

There will also be a youth group meeting every 1st, 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month during the church service (service starts at 10am, we leave for our meeting at about 10:20). We share our news, and then look at Jesus' example and consider what it means to live a good life. On the 3rd Sunday we stay in the service and serve as ushers and readers and musicians.

*For more information, contact [Fiona Case](#), and visit the [youth page](#) online!*

**Monthly Mission Partner: Interfaith Coalition for Earth Justice,  
a partner organization of San Diego 350**



**ICFEJ** is an organization of faith leaders and laypeople from diverse faith backgrounds, advocating for climate and environmental justice both in policy and the public square. It is a mostly volunteer non-profit, based in San Diego County. It believes that each of our faith traditions brings a vital perspective to the table and the streets. It offers radical love, fierce compassion, and eyes-wide-open hope.

**ICFEJ -**

**Educates:**

- Offering *Advancing Earth Justice* series of talks addressing faith and environmental/climate justice issues
- Tabling at faith communities and community fairs to promote environmental justice--it tables about 8-10X/year

**Equips:**

- Hosting interfaith worship, workshops and retreats on cultivating resilience in the face of the climate crisis.
- Engaging frontline faith communities on local eco-justice issues with it's BI-POC Outreach program.
- Working with faith communities to plant trees and increase tree canopy

**Mobilizes:**

- Advocating for the transition to clean energy in the energy sector and in government policy AND divestment from fossil fuels in faith communities and the financial sector at the County Board of Supervisors and Wells Fargo and Chase banks.
- Working on transportation equity in San Diego by holding forums with frontline communities and members of SANDAG to gathering signatures for Let Go San Diego, a massive transportation overhaul proposed by the County.

*Your donations will support the part-time paid coordinator and the supplies and meeting and printing costs of the organization. They will also allow ICFEJ to buy and plant more trees. All other work is done by volunteers.*

## Children and Families Ministry



Our children and families participated in the Concert in the Park from July 14 – August 11 at Pioneer Park. It was a huge success considering the endless number of children at our table at all times. Our kids and volunteers were busy painting faces, making slimes and playdough, and putting on tattoos, while some of the adults and I were conversing with the parents and handing MHUCC flyers, specifically Blessing of the Backpacks flyers. A huge thank you to David and Georgia Rickert for supporting us and being there every single Friday.

And thank you to all volunteers - young and adults - who made it all possible.

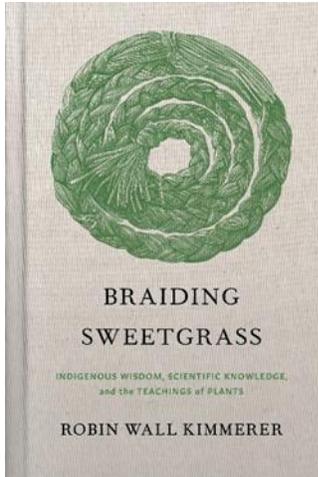


It was a lovely chaos doing our Social Justice Project on August 6. After we put together twenty backpacks with school supplies, the kids, volunteers, and I prayed over the backpacks. We went to Barrio Logan College Institute the following week and handed the third graders their backpacks during the first day of their Bootcamp! What a joy to see those little faces lit up, holding their new backpacks, and their school year has not even started yet.



Thirty-four adults and kids attended the All Generations Picnic at Mission Bay. Thanks to David Rickert and Frank Ruiz – for cooking the hotdogs at the park, and everybody brought some yummy sides and snacks. The best part of it was getting to know each other.

## Book Study



Join us Mondays in September for Zoom group to discuss **Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants** by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

Kimmerer is an indigenous scientist who braids different perspectives of nature drawn from her training in botanical science with the indigenous views of organisms as teachers and sacred gifts to produce a compelling reflection on ecological crises and solutions. Her essays show how we can learn to hear the spiritual and ecological lessons nature holds to live a more holistic life and confront climate and conservation challenges.

Sue Lowery will lead our discussion **Mondays, September 11, 18, and 25 at 6:30 pm** on [Zoom](#). Meeting ID: 899 8761 4900  
Passcode: 271161

## Uptown Community Service Center

Save Saturday morning, **September 9** for an Uptown's 5k Walkathon for Neighbors in Need. The walk starts at 8:00 AM at the University Christian Church in Hillcrest where the walk starts and ends. Walkers go to the Uptown Community Service Center. There will be a tour of the Uptown facility and a light continental breakfast before the return walk back to UCC. Donation is \$30.00.

**NEEDED: WASHCLOTHS for showers! ATHLETIC SOCKS! MENS' UNDERWEAR!** These are in great demand at Uptown. Can you help us provide them? (Our male clients generally wear a medium size and seem to prefer boxer briefs).



## Hymns and Beer

MHUCC's Fellowship/Membership and Growth Ministry will sponsor a Hymns and Beer evening soon, **Saturday, October 7, 6:30-8 pm in Fellowship Hall**. Come one come all, as Kris Abels, our Director of Instrumental Music accompanies our hymn selections on piano. We'll call out our favorite hymn title, then sing with gusto!

Snacks and munchies will be provided with a variety of juice and soda too! You're invited to bring your own beer to imbibe (if desired) as we sing our favorite hymns together.

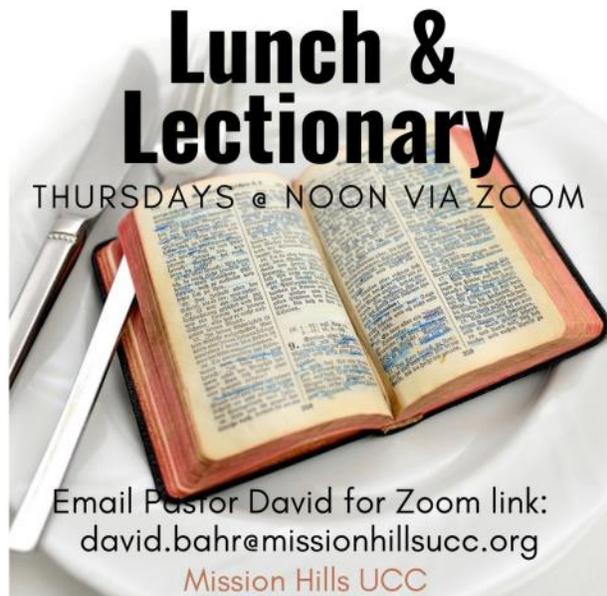


### Tour of SDRRN Migrant Shelter Operated by JFS

**Save the Date: Wednesday, October 11, 2-3 pm**

Sign-up for the tour will take place in September. Watch for details!

Come visit the San Diego Rapid Response Network (SDRRN) Migrant Shelter operated by Jewish Family Service of San Diego (JFS). The shelter, which has served over 140,000 people, has operated since October 2018 and has become a model for how to welcome asylum seekers into communities with dignity. At the tour, we will visit the Shelter Headquarters and Travel Center where Shelter guests spend time during the day, meeting with Shelter staff, arranging for travel to their final destination, and giving their children a place to play. The Shelter site has room for 77 to sleep whenever the hotel (utilized by the Shelter since the Covid pandemic) is at capacity. We will meet with Sr. Director of Immigration Services at JFS, Kate Clark, and learn how JFS provides assistance to families seeking asylum and safety in the U.S.



**Sunday 10 am Worship Service**

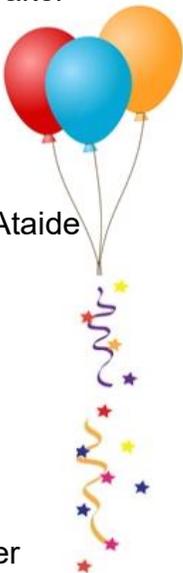
Please join us for worship in person or watch our livestream on [Facebook](#) and our [YouTube](#) Channel.

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](#).

**September Birthdays**

- Sep 2** Kristin Brown  
Bob Meinzer
- Sep 4** Cameron Cage  
Meghan Janssen  
Mary Lonsdale Baker
- Sep 5** Jessica Luedtke  
Susan White
- Sep 6** Melanie Gillette  
Dave Snodgrass
- Sep 10** Andrew Bowen-Ataide
- Sep 12** Dorothy Stock
- Sep 14** Jennifer Frasca
- Sep 15** David Sommer
- Sep 21** Leanna Selleck
- Sep 22** Victoria Freiheit
- Sep 25** Patricia McQuater
- Sep 26** Bob Murphy
- Sep 30** Carol Holt



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

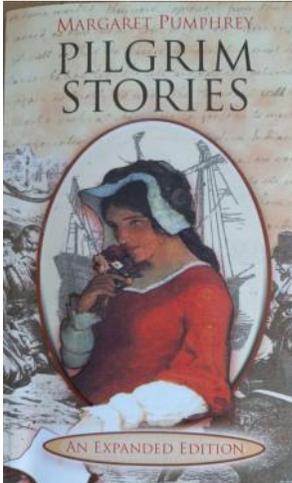
**Happy Birthday!**

**Meeting Minutes**

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

<https://missionhillsucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/JulyCouncil.pdf>

## History Corner



In 1936, our church celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and in honor of that occasion, they elected their **first church historian, Margaret B. Pumphrey**. Born in 1872 in Iowa, Margaret moved to Oak Park, Illinois, taught Primary School and in 1910, wrote her first book for junior readers, “Pilgrim Stories.” She moved to San Diego in 1924 and joined Mission Hills Congregational Church. She continued her teaching career and wrote her 2<sup>nd</sup> book for junior readers, “Under Three Flags,” an illustrated history of San Diego. I’ve been unable to locate a copy of “Under Three Flags,” but found “Pilgrim Stories” on Amazon. This is a compilation of stories of the lives of the first Pilgrim settlers, derived from original sources.

If you would like to borrow this book, contact [Pam Adler](#).

**Mission Hills United Church of Christ**  
 4070 Jackdaw Street, San Diego, CA 92103  
 (619) 296-2169; Fax (619) 296-2115  
**Website: [www.missionhillsucc.org](http://www.missionhillsucc.org)**

### STAFF DIRECTORY

Position	Staff Member	Phone Ext.	Email
Pastor	Rev. Dr. David Bahr	ext. 302	David.Bahr@missionhillsucc.org
Minister for Congregational Care	Rev. Janalee Borja		Janalee.Borja@missionhillsucc.org
Director of Ministry with -			
Children and Families	Artcel Ruiz		Artcel.Ruiz@missionhillsucc.org
Administrative Assistant	Elizabeth Quinones	ext. 301	Elizabeth.Quinones@missionhillsucc.org
Director of Instrumental Music	Kristopher Abels		Kris.Abels@missionhillsucc.org
Director of Vocal Music	Angelica Eclar		Angelica.Eclar@missionhillsucc.org
Youth Leader	Fiona Case		Fiona.Case@missionhillsucc.org
Worship Technologies Coordinator	Saige Afalava		Saige.Afalava@missionhillsucc.org
Sexton	Gloria Schacht		
Sunday Nursery	Gloria Schacht & Jianna Ruiz		

*General information*

*info@missionhillsucc.org*

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

*news@missionhillsucc.org*

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

## **Mission Hills UCC - Upcoming Events**

<b>September</b>	<b>Mission Partner: Interfaith Coalition for Earth Justice</b>
Friday, 9/1	Knitting 2 Give, 10 am - 12 pm, Commons
Sunday, 9/3	New Governance and Ministry Structure Briefing, 11:15, Commons
Friday, 9/8	Parents' Night Out, 6-8 pm, Fellowship Hall
Saturday, 9/9	Uptown Community Service Center WALK-A-THON
Sunday, 9/10	Homecoming Sunday
Monday, 9/11	Book group on Braiding Sweetgrass led by Sue Lowery, 6:30 pm, zoom
Saturday, 9/16	Youth Group Outing at Food Bank
Monday, 9/18	Book group on Braiding Sweetgrass led by Sue Lowery, 6:30 pm, zoom
Tuesday, 9/19	Feeding Mission Hills Food Distribution, 10:30 am
Thursday, 9/21	Knitting 2 Give, 2-4 pm, Commons
Sunday, 9/24	Bylaw Briefings, 11:15 am, Commons
Monday, 9/25	Book group on Braiding Sweetgrass led by Sue Lowery, 6:30 pm, zoom
<b>October</b>	<b>Mission Partner: UCC Neighbors in Need</b>
Sunday, 10/1	Bylaw Briefings, 11:15 am, Commons
Friday, 10/6	Knitting 2 Give, 10 am - 12 pm, Commons
Saturday, 10/7	Blessing of the Animals, 10 am, Parking Lot Hymns & Beer night, 6:30 - 8 pm, Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 10/8	Congregational Meeting
Wednesday, 10/11	JFS Migrant Shelter Tour, 2-3 pm
Sunday, 10/15	Partnership 40th Anniversary Picnic at Mission Bay, DeAnza Cove, 1-3 pm
Tuesday, 10/17	Feeding Mission Hills Food Distribution, 10:30 am
Thursday, 10/19	Knitting 2 Give, 2-4 pm, Commons
Fri. 10/20 - Sun. 10/22	MHUCC All Generations Weekend at Pilgrim Pines
Sunday, 10/29	Stewardship Begins Pumpkin Carving, 11:30 am, Fellowship Hall

**For all events, visit our online calendar: <https://missionhillsucc.org/calendar-of-events/>**