

PILGRIM CONGREGATIONALIST



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

April 2024

Deeper Relationships

We live in a world with so many demands on our time and attention that we frequently don't know the people in our neighborhoods and even our own church community. *Really* know each other. We may be friendly in the pew, chat at fellowship hour, even serve on a project or a team together, but these are not really opportunities to grow deeper together. We want to change that.

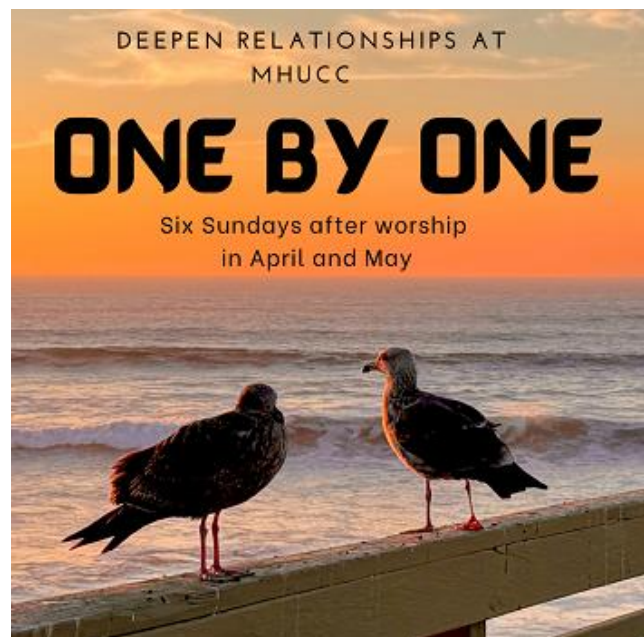
For the six weeks between Easter and Pentecost, after worship, we are going to offer opportunities to learn how to listen better, how to express genuine curiosity, and foster other skills that we may take for granted but which help us in all kinds of relationships. Asking questions can be awkward but feeling like you have been genuinely heard can be life-transforming.

Each Sunday, after a little skill building, we will have a one-on-one conversation with another willing participant. You may be shocked how a 14-minute exchange sets in motion a deep connection that can continue to build. Without small talk, the real conversation can begin.

The questions aren't hard but they can lead to deeper understanding. For example, on April 7, our question will be "What brought you to MHUCC and why do you stay?" What you share is totally up to you. On April 14, we will share about an inspirational person in our life and how they have helped us become who we are today. On May 12, the last Sunday, we will talk about some of the difficult conversations we may avoid having with family and neighbors – when do we engage the tension and when does self-care invite us to walk away? How do we express genuine curiosity which may lead to a break-through?

Something so simple is actually planting seeds that will generate growth in ourselves, our church, and our community. I hope you will grab some coffee and join us in the Commons for about 45 minutes following worship for any or all of our six sessions.

*Blessings,
Pastor David*



Moderator's Message

There are Angels in our Midst

Our congregation is filled with compassionate, caring, generous men and women who continue to give their time and resources to make our community and our world a better place. Joan Berry is just one of those people. A couple of weeks ago, Joan asked me if I'd like to visit our El Nido apartment before the family moved in. I welcomed the opportunity. I'd heard about our involvement in the project but seeing it brought me close to tears, tears of joy of course. El Nido truly is *The Nest*. A beautiful living space, ready for a family of four. But it's more than that. It has been furnished with care by Joan and Charlie and their team of angels. From the living room furniture, donated by a friend of Joan's who was downsizing, to the dining table refinished with care by Charlie, to the wall decorations, towels and sheets, to the toys waiting for the boys, to the stocked refrigerator and kitchen cupboards, and ...fresh flowers. There was even a roll of quarters for the laundry room. Everything this family would need, selected with love and care.

I asked Joan about the project. She shared that El Nido provides a safe haven for single women and women with children who are fleeing domestic violence. Survivors recover from trauma, build skills and incomes, and acquire permanent housing for their families. This 12-month program can be extended to 18 months if necessary for successful completion. It is part of the Interfaith Shelter Network's mission is to enable those we serve to move toward self-sufficiency. MHUCC has one of the apartments. Other churches in San Diego also have apartments in the complex. It's a haven for a community of women and their children.

El Nido is another of our outreach projects that is making a difference in our community. It is supported by our congregation, who are angels on a mission to give to others, just as we are called to do.

*Blessings and love,
Jere*



MHUCC Scholarship

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 June 10, 2024.

For more information, please contact, Suzanne Albrecht (suz1127@cox.net).



Easter Sunday, March 31st
Sunrise Service in Pioneer Park – 6:30 am
Festival Easter Worship – 10:00 am
Easter Egg Hunt – 11:15 am



Monthly Mission Partner - Feeding Mission Hills

The many people who volunteer at and support Feeding Mission Hills are honored to be selected as the Ministry of the Month for April. Feeding Mission Hills is an outreach ministry of MHUCC.

On the third Tuesday of every month we hand out a bag of food. For free. Anyone who comes to our parking lot with an ID can receive a large bag with fresh produce and one protein item. Our customers are primarily seniors living in the neighborhood. Many live in Green Manor. Most months we take 18 bags of food to First Congregational Towers, another low-income seniors apartment complex on Park Boulevard.

We think that we give out a quality bag of food. The produce is purchased by Ruth and Bob Henricks. They get it from a wholesaler that services restaurants, including The Huddle. The protein items are peanut butter or canned tuna or canned chicken or sometimes a canned ham at the holidays. These are purchased from grocery stores and Costco. Depending on the amount of food we get, we pack and hand out between 125 and 165 bags every month.

What does the food cost? The produce cost has ranged from \$800-\$1100 per month. The protein varies between \$300-\$400 per month. The Faith in Action budget supports the purchase of the protein. The fresh produce is paid for by donations from many individuals, both church members as well as community members.

You can support this ministry in two ways. You can come and volunteer. Usually, we have around 12-15 volunteers but more are always welcome. The setup, packing and clean up takes around 2 hours. No experience necessary! The other way you can help is to donate to the Food Program. There is a separate MHUCC Holding Fund where the contributions are held and used to pay for the food we hand out.

We have been volunteering with the program for about 10 years. We "inherited" the program from the dearly departed Pat Savile. The third Tuesday has become one of the real joys of the month for us.

If you have any questions, please contact us at clholt@cox.net, or 619-540-5624 (Carol) or 619-733-8922 (Larry).



Thanks for all your support.



Gratitude is Back!

Join us at **6 pm** on Zoom each **Wednesday in April** as we reset our week with 15 minutes for gratitude. A Zoom link will be sent each Wednesday.

Children & Families Ministry



SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT FOR THE UNHOUSED

Thank you all for donating items to the children's Social Project for the unhoused and a huge thanks to **Renee Davis** for leading it! It was not only a successful event, but the kids and the adults also had fun putting the packages together. The packages have been distributed to our MHUCC families and ready to hand them out to the unhoused individuals.

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT

There was a lot of fun, laughter, and energy during the Parents' Night Out. The kids had a great time getting to know new friends, eating dinner and snacks, and playing games.



HOT SPOT STUDIOS FIELD TRIP

Our Sunday School kids got to design tiles from Hot Spot Studios for the Mission Hills UCC Peace Pole. Cementing these tiles around the Peace Pole designed by our kids is an amazing way to let others know about our Children & Families Ministry. We will update you on the progress and will let you know when it's complete!

SAVE THE DATE

The Sunday School is creating a vegetable garden planter in front of the church and requests that you bring a bag of dirt from your backyard on **Earth Day Sunday - April 21**. We will combine all the dirt together to create a community garden of soil from our member's homes.

*For any questions, please contact [Artcel Ruiz](#),
Director of Ministry with Children & Families*



Humanitarian Catastrophe in Gaza

The infliction of suffering upon and purposeful starvation of the Palestinian people in Gaza is unacceptable. To remain silent at this point gives consent. But first, we may have questions like, what is the difference between anti-zionism and anti-semitism? Why is this a genocide? What is an apartheid state? What does this have to do with our Mission Hills UCC family? And finally, what is the UCC saying about a just and immediate ceasefire, and how can we participate?

Join us **Wednesday, April 10 at 6:30 pm** in the Commons for an educational session and conversation about this humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. Aida and Rev. Thad Haddad-Winkle, new members of MHUCC, will facilitate this complex discussion. Aida will share her personal connection as a person of Palestinian descent and how this affects her family, both among the Palestinian diaspora and in the West Bank.

MHUCC Youth Group

Mission Hills UCC has a Youth Group for teenagers in 7th through 12th grade. Our diverse group includes teens from our church families, from other churches, and several friends who are not involved in organized religion at all. Everyone is welcome here! We meet during the service most Sundays and also organize social and community service events.



Youth Group Activities

- **Sunday, March 31, 10:00 am:** Youth will hide the Easter eggs, and then supervise our Community Easter Egg Hunt after church.
- **Sunday April 14, 9:30am:** Pancake Breakfast before church, organized by the men's group to raise money for our Anaheim UCC Western Regional Youth Event. Youth are invited to help serve, and eat! (donation).
- **Friday, April 19: 6:00 pm – Saturday April 20, 9:30 am:** Overnight Indoor Camping. We will welcome youth from groups at our partnership churches around San Diego to join us.
- **Friday May 17, 6:30 – 8:30 pm:** Bowling and pizza at SDSU Aztec Lanes.
- **June 23 – 28:** UCC Western Regional Youth Event. Our church will be subsidizing the cost of this event to make it affordable for all our families. Artcel will be in touch with you shortly with sign up and transportation details for our group.

For any questions, please contact [Fiona Case](#), Director of Ministry with Youth or check out the youth page [online!](#)

Uptown Community Service Center
Helping Neighbors in Need

40th Anniversary

Join in celebrating the 40th anniversary of Helping Neighbors in Need

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2024 | 4:30 PM

5940 Kelton Ave. La mesa, CA 91942
The Table United Church of Christ La Mesa

🎵 **Hors d'oeuvres, no host beverage bar, auction, concert and dessert**

🎵 **Pianorama performs at 6:00 PM**
Thrill to four pianists performing together in concert
A medley of classical and contemporary music

\$90 | **\$50**
includes 4:30 pm Event & Concert Concert Only at 6:00 PM

For more information:
Please contact Joan Anderson or Karen deLaurier

Join in the celebration of the 40th anniversary of Uptown Community Service Center on April 13, 2024, starting at 4:30 p.m. at UCC La Mesa, 5940 Kelton Ave. La Mesa.

The event begins with heavy Hors d'oeuvres, a no host beverage bar, auction and music.

At 6:00 pm there will be a performance by Pianorama, a concert of four pianos performing classical and contemporary music, followed by dessert.

Tickets for the event are \$90 with a possibility of \$50 for the concert only.

For more information contact Joan Anderson or Karen deLaurier.



We are excited to announce our upcoming Pancake Breakfast, hosted by the Men's Ministry (M&M) and the youth will be there to help. This is a delightful fundraising event aimed at supporting our youth for their trip to Long Beach, CA for the Western Regional UCC Youth Event on June 23 - 27. The Pancake Breakfast will be held in the Fellowship Hall on **April 14** from 8:30 am to 9:45 am.

Your participation in this event will not only treat your taste buds but will also contribute to a meaningful cause. Come and bring your family, friends, and appetites! Let's come and eat together, enjoy some scrumptious pancakes, and support our youth. See you there! Any questions, please contact [Artcel Ruiz](#).

50ish and Beyond Recommendations - REPORT #4

What are some of the recommendations people made to Increase Feelings of Belonging and Connection?

1. Have a "Welcomer for the Day" who stands by the Pastor at the end of Worship to invite and lead people to Fellowship Hall
2. Members walk/escort new people to Fellowship Hall and introduce them to at least one person before leaving them
3. Have "designated minglers" in Fellowship Hall
4. Have tables set up in Fellowship Hall for people to sit and talk at
5. Exchange names with the people sitting near you in Church
6. Have names tags with larger print especially for first names
7. In Worship, when okay with people, share aloud and offer prayers for people dealing with difficult health or life situations
8. Try out the idea of a "HELPING BOARD" in Fellowship Hall where people can post index cards for needs or offer their help, such as need ride/can offer transportation, technology assistance
9. Use the "Ask Model". Ask people if they would be interested in being part of an activity or project or like to help out with a task
10. Check out the idea of a Volunteer Coordinator to make it easier for people to get involved and match their interest with someone's need

Did you know?

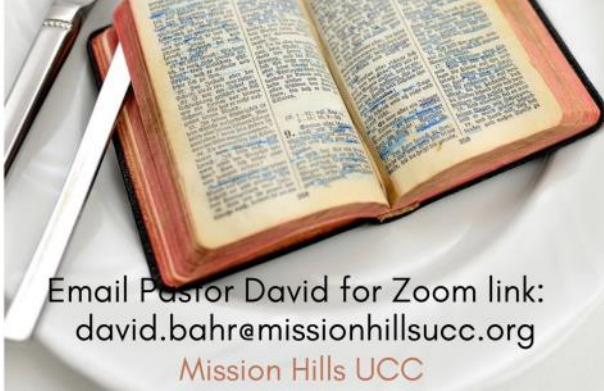
- a. Going to Fellowship Hall is very often difficult for newer people to do. Some long time members say they don't go because they might be left standing alone
- b. 75% of people attend MHUCC Worship most Sundays; 14% once or twice a month; 5% every few months

Next Week: Recommendations Fellowship & Socialization

The Life Stages Work Group: Wally Borschel, Sue Mayberry, Kim McDaniel, Mary Lonsdale Baker, Laura Borschel, Rev. Janalee Borja

Lunch & Lectionary

THURSDAYS @ NOON VIA ZOOM



Email Pastor David for Zoom link:
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 [Face-
book](#) Sunday morning if you wish to
follow along.

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

April Birthdays

- Apr 2 Danielle Carlin
- Apr 4 Devin Buss
- Apr 6 Alyssa James
- Apr 7 Steve McIntee
Geri Mu
- Apr 8 Samantha Brown
Marilyn Miles
- Apr 10 Andrew Wolf
- Apr 15 Don Taylor
Barbara Snodgrass
- Apr 18 Guy Halgren
- Apr 22 Alyssa Huntington
Tommy Huntington
- Apr 25 Samantha Pettis
Janalee Borja
- Apr 27 Anne Reichman
Sue Lake
- Apr 28 Jennifer Hom
Chase Davis
- Apr 30 Bettie Cain



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 February Church Council Meeting:

<https://missionhillsucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/FebCouncil.pdf>

Mission Hills Community Garage Sale

On Saturday morning, April 27, 8 AM – Noon, our church will participate in Mission Hills Annual Garage Sale. No, we won't be selling any of our trash and treasures, instead we are offering a "refueling" station for our neighbors, - a place they can stop for a cup of coffee, use our restrooms, and perhaps purchase baked items from our Bake Sale. Can you donate home baked items for this fundraiser for our church's Scholarship Fund? You can sign up in Fellowship Hall on Sunday April 7, 14, and 21, or contact Pam Adler, pamadler2@gmail.com or (703)945-9644.

This will be a great opportunity to offer some UCC hospitality to our neighbors and help replenish our scholarship fund.



History Corner



**MISSION HILLS UCC
ORGAN CENTENNIAL
2024**

**EARTH DAY RECITAL
FEATURING
DR. ALISON LUEDECKE
APRIL 21 AT 4 PM**

From an article in the **“San Diego Union,” Sept. 21, 1924**, reporting on the new organ being installed at Mission Hills Congregational Church - “Edward Crome, organ builder and installer of Austin organs on the Pacific coast, is in charge of the work. He installed the Spreckles organ in the pavilion in Balboa Park and declares the organ he now is assembling is just as fine and perfect an instrument as is the much larger one which he installed here 10 years ago.”

On **Sunday, April 21, 2024, at 4 PM**, you can enjoy a concert on this “fine and perfect” instrument performed by Dr. Alison Luedecke, Organist/Choir Director at the Church of the Nativity in Rancho Santa Fe. One of the pieces Dr. Luedecke will play is

the “Funeral March and Seraphic Song” by French composer Alexandre Guilmant, a piece that was played at our first organ recital on Sept. 25, 1924, in memory of our first Pastor, the Rev. John Doane.



April	Mission Partner: Feeding Mission Hills
Friday, 4/5	Knitting 2 Give, 10 am - 12 pm, Commons
Wednesday, 4/10	Addressing genocide in Gaza, Commons, 6:30 – 8 pm
Sunday, 4/14	Pancake Breakfast, 8:30 am
Tuesday, 4/16	Feeding Mission Hills Food Distribution, 10:30 am
Thursday, 4/18	Knitting 2 Give, 2-4 pm, Commons
Friday, 4/19	Youth Overnight
Sunday, 4/21	Earth Day Sunday Organ Concert, 4 pm
Saturday, April 27	Community Bake Sale, 8-12

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

Mission Hills United Church of Christ
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Website: www.missionhillsucc.org

STAFF DIRECTORY

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Worship Technologies Assistant	Devin Buss & Trevor Norkowski		
Sexton	Gloria Schacht		
Sunday Nursery	Gianna Ruiz & Amelia Norkowski		

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