

# PILGRIM CONGREGATIONALIST



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

October 2024

## Countdown with Prayers, Poetry, and Photos

If you're reading this newsletter by email, you've likely started getting an email every day with a prayer or poem as we move closer to the election. During anxious times, thank God for the faithful witness of those who have gone before us, who have lived through wars and famine, from whom we gain wisdom and courage.

On Day 38, we hear the guidance of our UCC ancestor, Rev. Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, who is known for, but rarely credited for, the Serenity Prayer:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things I can,  
And wisdom to know the difference.

In his prayer on Day 15, renowned scholar and UCC pastor Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, said, "When the world spins crazy... toward rage and hate and violence... we thank you for our rootage in communities of faith, for our many fathers and mothers who have believed and trusted as firm witnesses to us, for their many stories of wonder, awe, and healing... because we learn the world again always has a chance for life and sense and wholeness."

Some days, like Day 16, we're asked to pause with a simple prayer like this from Edwina Gately: "Quiet. Still. Be." Or to recite the mantra of Julian of Norwich on Day 11: "All shall be well. And all shall be well. And all manner of things shall be well."

What the world needs from us during these 40 days may be summed up in the words of Pope Francis on Day 5: "Where there is shouting, let us practice listening. Where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony. Where there is hostility, let us bring respect. Where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust."

On the day after the election, we will pray with UCC author and spiritual director, Rev. Jane Vennard, who is also my spiritual director, "Some of us are celebrating, grace us with humility in our victory. Some of us are mourning, grace us with compassion in our loss... Be with us as we work to create harmony in this divided world. We ask this in the name of all that is Holy."

May it be so!

*Pastor David*



## Moderator's Message

*Saturday, September 14, was quite a day in the life of MHUCC!* That morning was the inaugural Second Saturday Series with Julie Derry and Jaqueline Silverman presenting *Aging at Home vs Finding the Right Facility for You*. In an upbeat fashion they reminded us that we will inevitably decline physically or mentally or both and should prepare for that. It was a very useful, if sobering presentation. The series is presented by the Life Stages Team lead by Marilyn Miles and Sue Mayberry—many thanks to both for taking the lead. Next month, on the Second Saturday, representatives from the League of Women Voters will discuss the various propositions on the November ballot.



That evening we went back to church for our first ever All Generations Homecoming Sock Hop. And indeed all ages had a great time. It was wonderful to hear the beloved music of the 50's and to dance away in my Poodle skirt. Kudos to Kim and Chris Antos who transformed the Fellowship Hall and provided great food and fun for all. Rumor has it there might be another Homecoming Dance next year! If you missed it, you may have another chance!



Including a donation drive for the:

San Diego Humane Society

**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5 @ 10 AM

missionhillsucc.org



Join us on **Saturday, October 5** at 10 am in the church parking lot for our annual Blessing of the Animals, commemorating the Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi.

Bring your animal friend or if you would like to remember an animal that has passed, bring a photo.

This year we'll be supporting the work of the San Diego Humane Society. We invite you to bring items from their [Wish List](#). These supplies will be made available to the community through the Community Pet Pantry.

Please share this invitation with your friends and neighbors.

## INQUIRERS CLASS

Would you like to learn more about MHUCC and what it means to be a member?

Join us on **Sunday, October 6**, following the worship service, when Pastor David will lead us in a one hour session on the history, life and mission of MHUCC. Grab up a cup of coffee and a snack and join us in the Chapel (across from the church office.)

Questions? Contact church office (619)296-2169.

## Lunch with Pastor David

In MHUCC's recent member survey, members suggested having more opportunities to get together around the table.

Pastor David has suggested trying out a monthly:  
"Lunch with Pastor David".

Bring a lunch to the Commons on **Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>** at noon to share lunch together with Pastor David and other members.

~ The Life Stages Group



Brown Bag Lunch with Pastor David  
Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup> @ 12pm



## October Monthly Mission Partner

MENTAL HEALTH JUSTICE FOR ALL

Mental health is  
a universal  
human  
right

"God will not fail or lose heart until justice  
prevails throughout the earth." (Isaiah 42:9)



Our October Monthly Mission Partner is the national UCC's Neighbors in Need collection. This year the Neighbors in Need theme is "**Mental Health Justice For All!**" A just world for all is a world where the human rights and well-being of people with mental health challenges are respected, no matter who you are or where you are in life's mental health journey.

One-third of the offering supports [Council for American Indian Ministry \(CAIM\)](#). Two-thirds are used

by [Justice and Witness Ministries](#) to provide [grants](#) to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Thank you for giving generously online or during the collection at worship in October.

## Last Step to Ordination

Our church family is invited to attend the Southern Association UCC Fall Meeting on **Sunday October 6 at 3 pm in our sanctuary**. As their final step before being ordained, two of our members, Ken Jensen and Barbara Christensen will each have their "Ecclesiastical Council." This is an opportunity for our members and members of all UCC churches in our area to listen to and approve of their ordination, which can then be held once they have been called to a ministry setting. Both candidates, MHUCC's Members in Discernment, would appreciate the support of their home congregation.

MHUCC is part of the Southern Association of the Southern California Nevada Conference of the UCC. Bruce Ramet is the Association Moderator. The meeting will both be in person and on Zoom. Refreshments will be served afterward where you can meet other UCC members around San Diego.

Candidates already in the ordination process can choose between writing a traditional ordination paper or using the new "Marks Portfolio" system.

- **Ken Jensen's Ordination Paper:** View [here](#).
- **Barbara Christensen's Marks Portfolio:** The UCC's new process, much longer and more comprehensive, is based on the UCC's Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers. You can focus on Sections 1 and 2. View [here](#).

## Lots of Thank You's in September!

Thank you to Kris Abels for a year of organ recitals and celebrations for our organ centennial – and thanks to all our donors toward the projects that repair and improve our organ

Thank you to our faithful musicians – singers, bell ringers, instrument players – who presented a brand new commissioned anthem and provide beautiful music every Sunday

Thank you to our faithful volunteers led every month by Carol and Larry Holt to provide produce to our neighbors.

Thank you to our Faith in Action Team for the opportunity to assemble Care Kits for migrants through Jewish Family Services

Thank you to Chris and Kim Antos and the team they led for our tremendously enjoyable All Generations Homecoming Sock Hop

Thank you to our Men's Group for making us pancakes on Sunday, September 29, to raise money for our All Generations Pilgrim Pines Weekend

Thank you to our new Life Stages Team for their inaugural Second Saturday Series. Mark your calendar for October 12 when the League of Women Voters come to teach us about all the upcoming ballot issues

Thank you to YOU and all our members who are the faithful stewards of our ministry

## BALLOT MEASURE PRO & CON TALK



**MISSION HILLS**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Life Stages Team

**Ballot Measure Pro & Con Talk**  
LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN DIEGO

Mission Hills UCC  
**Second Saturday Speaker Series**  
**12**  
OCTOBER  
**10 AM - 12 PM**

A trained League speaker will discuss all state and local ballot measures. There will be a Q & A following the presentation.

4070 Jackdaw St  
San Diego, CA 92103  
missionhillsucc.org  
info@missionhillsucc.org

Join us as Stephanie Sontag from the League of Women Voters provides a balanced look at all state and local ballot measures. She'll cover:

- What each measure will do
- How they change existing laws
- Who benefits
- Costs and who pays for them
- Supporters and opponents
- Who is funding the support or opposition

Bring any election materials you have received from the San Diego County Registrar of Voters or the California Secretary of State to "follow along."

A Q&A session will follow the presentation to answer any of your questions.

## Hymns and Beer - Saturday, October 26, '24 6:30-8 pm in Fellowship Hall

MHUCC's Fellowship Team will sponsor a Hymns and Beer evening soon. 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 flavors too! You're invited to bring your own beer to imbibe (if desired) as we sing our favorite hymns together.

## September Youth Group Activities

In San Diego County, I Love a Clean San Diego organizes Coastal Cleanup Day with support from the California Coastal Commission, who organizes this effort statewide. This is all part of the greater International Coastal Cleanup that's led by the Ocean Conservancy. This year our Youth Group joined the effort. We cleared trash from South Juniper Canyon removing more than 200lb of discarded food containers and wrappers, plastic bags, clothing, old electronics and cigarette butts from this natural open space. It was a fun and worthwhile morning – something we will certainly repeat next year.



At our September Youth Group Meeting we welcomed Sunni Robertson, Director of Volunteer Engagement at the Jewish Family Service of San Diego. We learned about the legal and very impactful difference between people that are defined as refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, the particular challenges that each group faces, and the practical ways that JFS helps the people, and families, that arrive at our border. We made holiday ornaments, which will be used to raise money for JFS, and then we went to Lefty's for pizza.



## CHILDREN & FAMILIES MINISTRY

The Sock Hop was an unforgettable evening of dancing, food, games, and plenty of laughter. The Fellowship Hall was beautifully transformed into a lively 1950s scene, complete with vintage décor, vinyl records, and jukebox tunes. Most of us hit the dance floor in our '50s costumes, from poodle skirts to leather jackets, twisting and swinging to the oldies. There were fun games for all ages, and the sense of community and joy filled the room. It was a night to remember, where we not only relived the nostalgic era but also created new memories together!



### CONGRATULATIONS!

Chase and Lily, our third graders, received their Bibles last Sunday, September 15. This special moment marks another step of their journey in faith, fostering a deeper understanding of Jesus, kindness, and community.

### PILGRIM PINES TRIP OCTOBER 18-20

Last day to register is **September 29th**. Click [here](#) to register.



**DON'T FORGET!** Come to church for a pancake breakfast on Sunday, **September 29** at 8:30 am! Hosted by the Men's Ministry, this fundraiser supports Pilgrim Pines. Enjoy a delicious breakfast while contributing to a meaningful cause. Bring a friend, your appetite, and your support!

## Our Sympathy



We offer our sympathy to Vic vanLint and family upon the passing of our member Janet Anderson - just two weeks from her 97th birthday.

We will share details about a memorial service when plans are made.

## Advent Book

Labor Day, the symbolic end of summer, is past. Fall officially started about a week ago. So, of course, that means the Big Box stores will soon be sporting Christmas paraphernalia squeezed in with Halloween and Thanksgiving décor. That does make us chuckle and shake our heads.

But in all honesty, it's not too early to start thinking about the Christmas season and, in particular, MHUCC's **ADVENT BOOK**. For those of you newer to the church, the **ADVENT BOOK** is a cherished part of the Christmas holiday season. For each day of the Advent season, the church issues a story written by one of YOU to inspire and remind us of the true meaning of Christmas and the coming of Christ into our lives.

For these stories, members of our congregation write stories of how they feel God has touched their lives. This is not about the clouds opening and seeing the face of God looking down on you... although that would be a great story. They can be about large impactful experiences that changed the course of a life. It's more likely about the simpler things like the conversation you had with someone who helped you to find an answer to a question you had been pondering. Perhaps you received news that upset the course of life. How did you get through that or how are you getting through it? Or perhaps, a decision you made didn't work out as planned and you realized the direction you were really being called to.

YOU HAVE a story. Unsure you really have a story or think your story may not seem important enough? Talk to us about it. Not sure you feel comfortable writing it? We'll help you do that. When we share these stories, we share ourselves. Suddenly, the person you say hello to on Sunday is much more than just the person who sits next to you in the pew. You may realize that you have something in common with someone you didn't know well. And then, suddenly, we are connected to each other and to God.

The Advent Book takes some time to put together so we are asking that you submit your stories to **AL Mazur at [ajmazur621@aol.com](mailto:ajmazur621@aol.com) by Thursday, October 31**. Please compose these stories as a Word document or directly type them into an email. Other types of word processing software have caused problems for us. Some of you may want to provide your story in alternative forms such as poems, photos (identify location) or drawings (include title if any). That is all very welcome. If you have any questions, please contact AL Mazur at the email above or at 619-757-5143. Thank you in advance for your participation.

## Thanks for your tremendous response to our request for plastic bags

To paraphrase scripture, "... seek and ye shall find."

We so appreciate you passing on your surplus heavy duty plastic bags for the MHUCC Food Distribution program. We hope your donations helped thin the herd of your accumulated plastic bags!

They have been a huge help and instantly put to use for our recent monthly food distribution days. By using donated bags we are not having to spend the food budget on purchase of more plastic bags. This allows the budget to be used entirely for purchase of food and it helps cut down on creation of more plastic bags – a win-win situation we think.

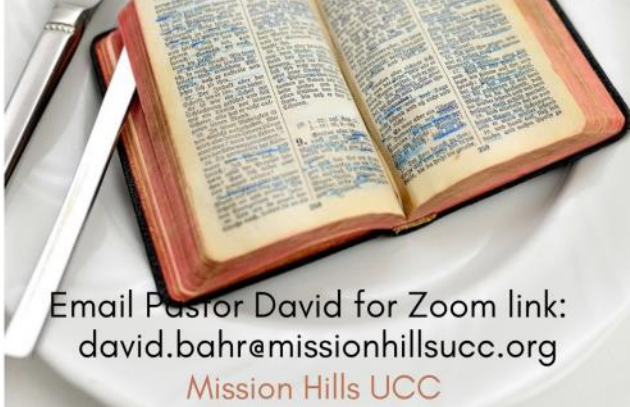


Thanks again for your help for and support of the food distributions. Plastic bags are always appreciated and accepted.

Larry & Carol Holt

# 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 our [YouTube Channel](#).

A bulletin link is emailed at 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays if you wish to follow along.

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

## October Birthdays

Oct 1	Elizabeth Quiñones
Oct 3	Isaac Muñoz
Oct 6	Lorraine Boyle Marylou Chandler
Oct 10	Tim Wolf
Oct 11	Juanita Hill Antoinette Byda Tom Tipps
Oct 12	Jennifer Berman
Oct 14	Woody James Nancy Barrett
Oct 15	Joan Anderson
Oct 16	Pat Wahlen
Oct 17	Ronald Wilson
Oct 25	Ronnie Williams Steven Nugent
Oct 26	Jean Neill David Bahr
Oct 29	Una Marie Pierce



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 August Church Council Meeting:

<https://missionhillsucc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/AugustCouncil.pdf>

## Civil Rights Pilgrimage



MHUCC and Pilgrim UCC in Carlsbad are collaborating on a week-long civil rights pilgrimage to Birmingham, Selma, Montgomery, and Atlanta in September of 2025.

Details and costs are still being assembled, but if you have any interest, please tell Pastor David and he will keep you informed.

Plans include walking the bridge in Selma and worship at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. This photo is from one of our stops: the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham where four little girls were murdered.

## History Corner



### PLAY BALL!

From Lane Field at the San Diego Harbor, 1936-1958, to Westgate Park at Mission Valley, 1958-1967, to the current Petco Park, - from the minor league to the majors, - the San Diego Padres have always been enthusiastically supported by the members of Mission Hills UCC. In a 1961 church newsletter, we read "The Deacons are sponsoring the baseball game on June 9 at Westgate Park with proceeds to be divided: 50 cents to our church, 50 cents to the Council of Churches, and one dollar to the San Diego Padres."

Image: [By Unknown author - San Diego Padres, Public Domain.](#)

### Mission Hills UCC -October Events

<p>October</p> <p>Friday, 10/4</p> <p>Saturday, 10/5</p> <p>Sunday, 10/6</p> <p>Saturday, 10/12</p> <p>Tuesday, 10/15</p> <p>Thursday, 10/17</p> <p>Fri. 10/18 - Sun. 10/20</p> <p>Saturday, 10/26</p>	<p>Mission Partner: Neighbors in Need</p> <p>Knitting 2 Give, 10 am - 12 pm, Commons</p> <p>Blessing of the Animals, 10 am, Parking Lot</p> <p>Inquirers' Class, 11:15 am, Chapel</p> <p>Youth: Chicano Park, 11:30 am - 3 pm</p> <p>Second Saturday Series, 10 - 12, Sanctuary</p> <p>Feeding Mission Hills Food Distribution, 10:30 am</p> <p>Knitting 2 Give, 2-4 pm, Commons</p> <p>MHUCC All Generations Weekend at Pilgrim Pines</p> <p>Hymns and Beer Night, 6:30-8 pm, Fellowship Hall</p> <p>Youth: Cat-themed Halloween Party at KCC</p>
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For all events, visit our online calendar: <https://missionhillsucc.org/calendar-of-events/>

**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)**

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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**