



United
Methodist
Church
Westlake
Village

Covenant

The mission of the Church is to make, mature and mobilize disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

Volume 2024, Issue 9

September 2024

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS: "Hope is a Verb"



Pastor Darren

What do you know about "Hope"? It's an interesting word. When you look it up you'll find that it's not a linking verb, but an action verb. This is kind of misleading because that means it's not really an action. In other words, it's usually the word describing the action in the sentence; not the action itself. We're conditioned that way a bit. Hope isn't doing something. It's just a desire for it to happen. Hoping you're having BBQ for dinner isn't the same as having it. And I really like good BBQ.

As people of faith, we are often focused on hope: hope for the future, hope for God's world, hope in God's people. But we'll often leave it there. Just hoping something happens. Have you ever wondered what it would mean for us to look at "hope" as something we do; something we live out? What might that change? ...Potentially everything.

In the Bible the book of James seems to have this focus. His famous verse is James 2:17, "*So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.*" *These are strong words but he was trying to get across the point that we have to live our faith.*

We can't just have hope, we have to live hope.

Our Worship series through September is about hope. It's called "Hope is a Verb!" I'm excited to take this journey with you!

Hope is a Verb

September 1 - James 1:17-27

"Making Hope Real"

As Christians we have a key role to play. If we're going to help others see God, we'll have to live like those who know God.

September 8 - James 2:1-10, (11-13), 14-17

"Hope has a Body?"

Works are the 'body' of faith. If there is no body, there may as well not be faith.

September 15 - James 3:1-12

"Hope in my Words"

Because what we say has power, we need to do what we can to preserve the sanctity of communicating.

September 22 - James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

"Hope in my Heart"

Our true motives will always have power over us. How good are we at making those motives pure? What if our core self is what God has made, and we keep that inside?

September 29 - James 5:13-20

"Our Partner in Hope"

By living hope we have effectively teamed with God to make evident what you & God desire.

Pastor Darren

let's
CELEBRATE
our
HARD WORK

Happy Labor Day!

**Church Office Will be Closed.
Monday 9/2 in Observance
of Labor Day.**

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

By Carol Ames, Communications Coordinator

Summer worship services are often a bit different than usual, while the choir is on hiatus and people – including the pastor, take vacation time away. Pastor Darren was on vacation the first **three Sundays in August** and the congregation heard thought-provoking messages from three different people: **Rick Schroeder**, **Linda Northrup** and the new District Superintendent for the North District, **Rev. Garth Gilliam**. Rick, president and CEO of Many Mansions, spoke about how the name Many Mansions came to be, based on the words in John 14:2, and what the non-profit does. Linda talked about how Jesus was called the Bread of Life – and she even brought some homemade bread for coffee hour. Tim also

talked on Aug. 11 about the Mission of the Month, *School on Wheels*. Rev. Gilliam’s sermon title was “Grit,” meaning Growth, Resilience, Integrity & Tenacity. As individuals and as a church, people get knocked down and use Grit (the first cousin of resilience) to get back up again, he said. When you find your purpose, are persistent, have passion and have faith & heart - knowing that God is always with you, the resolve to make things better can be found. *If you missed any of these Sundays, I encourage you to watch them on YouTube and be blessed*



Worship on Aug. 4 - with Rick



Worship on Aug. 11 - with Linda



Worship on Aug. 18 - with Garth

Pastor Darren was back from vacation for **Kick-off Sunday** on August. 25. It was great to have the children sing, the Chancel Choir be back and the Covenant Ringers play the offertory. In addition to having a backpack blessing during a Time with Children, the children made “God is always with you” tags for their backpacks in Sunday School. Following worship, a hot dog lunch was served in Alton Hall. Judi Rivera, a former church member who we prayed for while she was in hospitals and the VA Rehab facility in Long Beach for nearly two years, was with us for worship and lunch on that Sunday. She is a true example of having Grit!

Unfortunately, there were technical problems with the livestream that day and it quit working early on, before the service actually got started. Hopefully the cause of that problem will be discovered and resolved quickly.



Kickoff Sunday on Aug. 25 & Judi’s visit



No photos were taken on 9/25 of children with backpacks or the tags they made, so this represents those activities.

BE RESPECTFUL OF OUR SANCTUARY!
LET'S KEEP IT STAIN FREE!



The sanctuary carpet was recently cleaned and coffee stains were removed.
Let's keep it beautiful.

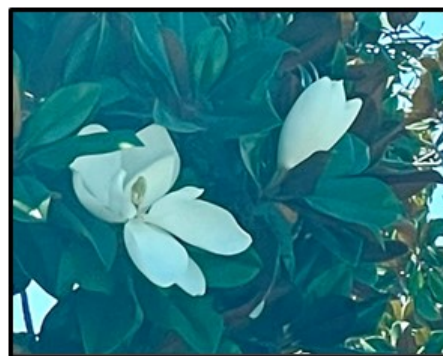
Tracy's Tree

A new Magnolia tree has been planted near the entrance to East Wing and the Bishop Kennedy Room. Thank you to my wonderful friends Jan Ahlquist, Sharon Brandenberger and Sharon Matland for donating the tree in memory of my daughter Tracy. Tracy's spirit will live on in that tree.

Janet Todd and family



Tracy's Magnolia Tree

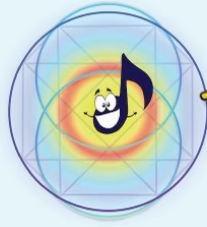


White Magnolia blossoms



The 2024-2025 school year for the preschool starts Tues., Sept. 3.
There are still openings in 3- and 4-year-old classes.
If you know anyone looking for a wonderful preschool,
have them call the The Growing Place office (805) 497-7064 -
or visit the website <http://www.growingplacewlv.org>.

The United Methodist Church Westlake Village is happy to offer music education to children in our community through *As One Harmony*. Children will learn to sing and ring chimes or handbells and perform in the community and in our worship services. See info on flyer below for details and the rehearsal schedule.



As One Harmony .org

**TK-8th
Secular Performance Groups**

*Music Education
Friendships
FUN!*

*Community Outreach
through UMCWV!*

Fall Session
8/21 — 12/15

Wed Rehearsals
at UMCWV



As One Ensemble
(4th-8th Grade)
Voice 4-5:30pm
Bells 5:30-6pm

Handbells



Directed by
Nick Newkirk
— B.A. —

Vocal Performance



Directed by
Katie Phillipson
— B.S., M.A.Ed, C.T.C —

Chimes



Directed by
Katy Herbst De Cortina
— B.S. —

As One Melody
(1st-3rd Grade)
Chimes 4:15-4:55pm
Voice 5-6pm

As One Tune
(TK-K)
Bi-weekly
schedule online



Young people need creative, joyful musical expression, philanthropic mindsets, confidence, inner peace, & FUN—to uplift the individual & community. As One Harmony is a secular nonprofit 501(c)(3) fulfilling this mission. Support AOH in forming "As One Ability," a much-needed ADAPTIVE choir! We operate by your generous donations—a hearty & sincere THANK YOU!

2024 CHILDREN'S CHOIR PERFORMANCE DATES

SUNDAYS

8/25
9/29
10/27
11/17
12/8
12/24

Let's Sing!

2024 - UMCWV Ministry Fair



Sunday 9/29

UMCWV MINISTRY FAIR

BE PART OF GREAT THINGS!

Missions

Green Church

Music choir/bells

Prayer Group

Hospitality

Pizazz

Sunday School

And More.....

GET CONNECTED



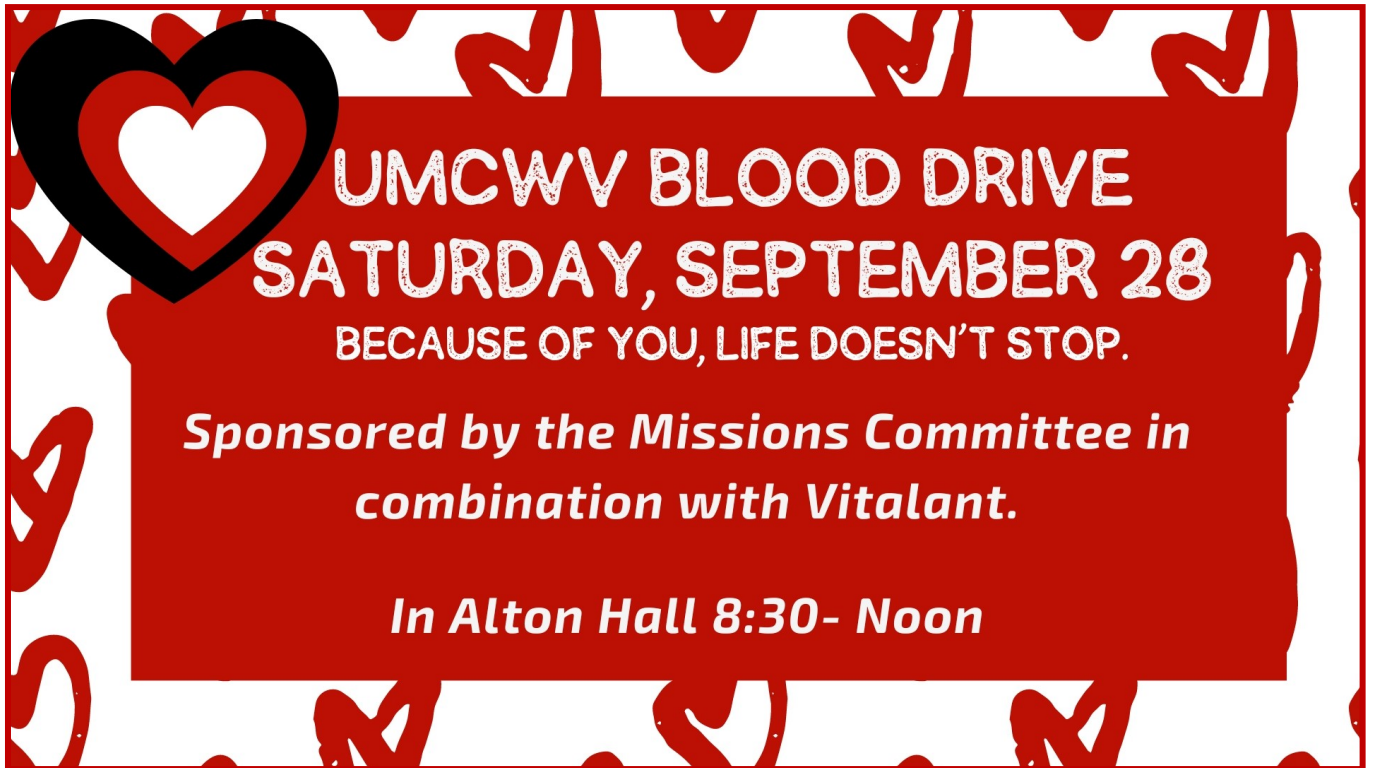
Saturday Night Suppers
September 14, 5:30
South of the border

Hosts: Barbara & Russ Stone and Cohosts
John & Lynn Dokken
Held At Stone's Home

Come and enjoy great food and fellowship



Because of you, life doesn't stop. Donate blood!



UMCWV BLOOD DRIVE
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
BECAUSE OF YOU, LIFE DOESN'T STOP.

*Sponsored by the Missions Committee in
combination with Vitalant.*

In Alton Hall 8:30- Noon

Click anywhere on the graphic above or link below to schedule an appointment to donate.

[Blood Donation is Essential | Vitalant](#)

Women's One-Day Retreat at UMCWV

Save the Date & Watch for more Details

Saturday November 2, 8-3
In Alton Hall

Leaders: Pastor Kristi Smith
And Pastor Rachel Tabutol



September Mission of the Month

Harbor House in Thousand Oaks is in need of your support! A few months ago, Lutheran Social Service shut the doors of its drop-in center in T.O. Essential services for the unhoused and those in need had been provided there. This closure has significantly impacted Harbor House.

Harbor House was formed to address the needs of the Conejo Valley community. It helps those in need find housing, emergency shelter, food, employment, along with legal, medical and psychological services. From Pi House for transitional youth to the Conejo Valley Free Meal Program offering lunches and hot meals to anyone experiencing food insecurity, Harbor House is a vital part of our community.

Harbor House looks to faith communities and service organizations in the Conejo Valley for support and guidance in making our community a safe and just environment for all. It is why the Missions Committee has chosen Harbor House as the Mission of the Month for September.

Thank you for your support!

How to donate:

By check made payable to UMCWV, Memo Line: Mission of the Month HH
Online at UMCVW.org - go to Donate and click on Mission of Month.

HARBOR HOUSE

Interested in helping those who are struggling in the Conejo Valley? Harbor House is looking for volunteers in many different areas. Check out the program opportunities below to see if they might be a good fit for you:

- ♦ **Laundry Service** - Are you looking for a meaningful way to give back to the community? Join Harbor House every Wednesday from 2 - 4 p.m. for Harbor House Laundry Day at Launderland! This is a fantastic opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those experiencing homelessness. As a volunteer, you'll play a vital role in providing essential support to those who are unhoused.* Harbor House covers the cost of using the machines and provides detergent (two load

maximum per family). Your assistance ensures that individuals and families in need have access to clean clothes. *Laundry service is for homeless clients only.

<https://harborhouseto.dm.networkforgood.com/forms/harbor-house-volunteer-application>.

- ♦ **Meal Program** - Sign up to help provide hot meals and sack lunches daily!
<https://www.harborhouseto.org/meal-program>.
- ♦ **Specialized volunteer opportunities** include Photographers, Writers, Donation Pick-Up, Case Management, Disability Applications, and Donor to Donor volunteers. Click on link for more information on each of these volunteer positions.
<https://www.harborhouseto.org/volunteer>.

**Non-perishable food
drop off available every Sunday!**



LIVING FAITH. SEEKING JUSTICE. PURSUING PEACE.

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

The Social Concerns Committee is asking UMCWV to join with its sister members of the Conejo Inter-faith Refugee Team (CIRT) to supply **Welcome Baskets** for new refugees. As a founding member of CIRT, UMCWV has participated in helping many refugee families from countries such as Syria, Ukraine and Afghanistan, among others.

CIRT helps to furnish apartments for newly arrived families. The Welcome Baskets of kitchen, bath and cleaning supplies are essential for a family to begin its life in a new home.

Please open the SignUp Genius link below to select items to donate or make a donation to the Refugee Fund on the UMCWV website.

<https://bit.ly/WelcomeBaskets2024>

Donated items can be placed in the designated box at Church each Sunday in September.

Thank you for your continued support.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. Matthew 25:35



WELCOME BASKETS DRIVE

CONEJO INTERFAITH REFUGEE TEAM


✔ KITCHEN ✔ BATHROOM ✔ CLEANING SUPPLIES

- Collection box at church
- See list of items needed
- on website listed below!

<https://bit.ly/Welcomebaskets2024>



Upcoming Events



**CASA PACIFICA COTTAGE TOUR
AND LUNCH**

FOR YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE

**COME SEE THE RESULT OF YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION TO CASA PACIFICA.
ENJOY LUNCH AND A TOUR OF THE NEWLY BUILT COTTAGES FOR
YOUNG ADULTS AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE!**



MONDAY OCTOBER 7, 11:00 A.M.
MEET IN CHURCH PARKING LOT TO CARPOOL
RSVP TO CATHIE.LOEB@AOL.COM

- UMCWV has supported the Transitional Youth Services program at Casa Pacifica for 3 years.
- Tour Casa Pacifica on Monday, October 7
- Visit the 27 units of transitional housing for at-risk young adults
- Learn about the services for young adults at Casa Pacifica
- Lunch included
- Meet at UMCWV at 11 a.m.
- Caravan to Casa Pacifica in Camarillo

RSVP to Cathie Loeb cathie.loeb@aol.com or Patricia Cordover, patricia@fourcords.com by Oct 1.



Casa Pacifica, 1722 South Lewis Rd., Camarillo, CA 93012 ~ Phone: (805) 366-4040

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

LAMPE, Steve & Cindy	09/01
FACCONE, Ben & Cindy	09/02
DONAVON, Boyd & Peggy	09/05
GRAY, Curt & Dina	09/06
ELGINER, John & Julie	09/14
DOUGHERTY, Agnes & Ken	09/19
WEBB, Tom & Terri	09/21
WILCOX, John & Candi	09/30

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

GEHR, Terry	09/01
WEBB, Terri	09/01
MACDONALD, Penny	09/06
STEMEN, Betty	09/07
HELTON, John	09/08
LANGBERG, Susan	09/09
BIRMINGHAM, Jake	09/10
MENGES, Doug	09/13
WOOD, Alyssa	09/13
NORTHRUP, Linda	09/14
COWDREY, Darren	09/15
ANDERSON, Tom	09/17
WILCOX, Candi	09/17
ANDERSON, Marilyn	09/18
DISNEY, Richard	09/18
SEABURY, Cathy	09/18
WELLS, H. Neal	09/18
DOUGHERTY, Ken	09/19
HIMSL, Kyle	09/19
SEVERANCE, Phil	09/20
STONE, Christopher	09/20
FEY, Paul	09/21
NEWKIRK, Kyle	09/21
SHIHABI, Ryan	09/21
MORSE, Barbara	09/22
ADDISON, Janet	09/24
STONE, Barbara	09/24
HENDRY, Winter	09/25
COOPER, Gene	09/26
BONDS, Tim	09/28

Congratulations

TREASURER'S REPORT

July 2024 Income:
\$46,476
July 2024 Expenses:
\$50,329
Fiscal YTD Income:
\$360,164
Fiscal YTD Expenses:
\$357,453

ATTENDANCE

	In-Person	YouTube	Total
July 7	120	35	155
July 14	80	73	153
July 21	102	27	129
July 28	120	71	191

July YouTube totals are taken as of 8/28/2024

Finance Corner

Q. What is the purpose of Apportionments giving? How has UMCWV been doing with its Apportionments obligations?

A. Together, through our connected congregations of the United Methodist Church, apportionment giving allows the UMCWV to accomplish what no single church, district or annual conference ever could hope to do alone. In this way, each individual, each family, each congregation gives a fair share for the church's work. Our local church, UMCWV, has met its obligations for the last two years in a row! Currently, we have pledged \$53,385 for 2024, which is 72% of our obligation. However, less than 30% has so far been donated toward our apportionments pledge. We are hopeful that we will fulfill our obligation in 2024 to continue our trend!

Ministries of the church happen through the faithful efforts of its lay people.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Chair: Rick Schroeder

OFFICERS

Lay Leader:.....Jeanie Severance
Lay Delegates to Annual Conference:..... Boyd Donavon, Candice Shehorn,
John Shehorn, Rick Schroeder
Treasurer:.....Lee Friel
Assistant Treasurer:.....John Shehorn
Financial Secretary: Agnes Dougherty
Church Historian Carol Ames

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

Communications:..... Carol Ames
Finance: John Shehorn
Foundation: Don Phillipson
Nominations: Pastor Darren
Staff Parish Relations:..... Phyllis Marbach
Stewardship..... John Shehorn
Trustees Mike Stone

PROGRAMMATIC COMMITTEES

Christian Education.....Amy Comparato
Growing Place.....Tom Sutphen
Conejo ConnectRick Schroeder
Membership Care.....Jeanie Severance
Membership Growth
Missions Committee Cathie Loeb
Music..... Barbara Ghosh & Carol Ames
Social Concerns CommitteeChris & Kitty Soltow

AGE-LEVEL MINISTRIES

Family Ministries:
Men's Ministries: Tom Hopkins
Women's Ministries:..... Candice Shehorn

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Clergy..... Pastor Darren
Youth Rep
General Nancy Moravec, David Keddle, Boyd Donavon



STAFF - PARISH RELATIONS

SPRC is always interested in hearing from our Church Family. You may e-mail members at SPRC@umcww.org, contact the chair, Phyllis Marbach, through the church office or attend one of its upcoming meetings for a brief discussion time.

S
P
R
C

Phyllis Marbach, chair
Doug Menges
Tom Sutphen

} 2024

Polly Tattersall Martin
Jan Sorenson
Cindy Faccone

} 2025

Roz Thebaud
Candi Wilcox
Linda Northrup

} 2026

COVENANT DEADLINE
For October issue: Noon September 15

Senior Pastor: Rev. Darren Cowdrey
revdarren@umcww.org

Director of Children & Youth Ministries:
Charissa Birmingham
charissaumcww@gmail.com

Administrative Director: Vinia Pavlath
vinia@umcww.org

Media Tech: Kallie Smith

Director of Music: Gloria Hilliard
gloria@umcww.org

Organist: Jenny Lee
jenny@umcww.org

Bell Choir Director: Nick Newkirk
NNewkirk49@yahoo.com

Children's Choir Director: Katie Phillipson

Treasurer: Leroy Friel

Financial Secretary: Agnes Dougherty

Kids Zone Attendant: Aurora Smith

The Growing Place Preschool
Director: Jen Sorenson



Resident Bishop:
Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank

North District Superintendent:
Rev. Garth Gilliam

Office Phone:
805-497-7884



Welcome!

*Join Us For Worship Each Sunday
At 10 a.m.*

*In-person worship is available in the
sanctuary.*

Or

*Join us for the online service live at 10 a.m.
each Sunday at umcww.org - or watch it
later on our website or YouTube.*

*Check website for additional details or
changes in scheduling.*

*UMCWW continues to thrive.
To see ways you can be a part of our
community, go to umcww.org*



Setting a Course for a Better Life

United Methodist Church
Westlake Village