



The Courier

First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park

22700 Sherman Way, West Hills, CA 91307-2396

Telephone: 818.340.2950

e-mail address: crossandflame@att.net

website: www.umccp.org

Preschool: 818.340.6639

Welcome to First Church where everyone is either our friend or family.

Sunday Worship at 10:00 am

Summer 2019

A Sermon by Bishop Grant J. Hagiya

The 35th Annual Session of the California-Pacific Annual Conference began with worship on June 13. The scripture was Isaiah 43:15-21. Pastor Lynn's transcription of Bishop Grant J. Hagiya's sermon about his vision of a new church follows. The sermon in its entirety is available at vimeo.com/calpacumc (scroll down to AC2019 – Opening Worship).

Let me begin today with a quote that I came across recently that I really appreciate. It goes like this. ... If we haven't done anything really uncomfortable, not just a little bit uncomfortable, but really uncomfortable, we're probably not pushing ourselves far enough.

Lord knows General Conference in St. Louis has made us all really uncomfortable. And believe it or not, I think that that's a good thing for the denomination. The Adaptive Leadership School teaches us that unless a problem has enough heat or pressure, then we won't do anything to change. But if it has enough pressure, we will act in some way. If anything, General Conference actions forced us to be uncomfortable. And this might be the ripeness ready for real change to take place in our church.

I'd like to outline where I want to go. ... On the prophetic paradigm that the Biblical prophets used in their giving a message from God, it begins with individual and corporate confession. We then move to naming our present reality and how far we are from the will of God. And then, we finally share God's preferred vision for the future.

So, let's begin with individual and corporate confession. I and all of us have fallen short of the glory of God's love and holiness. Around all of our denominational crisis, all of us have fallen short. None of us have truly embraced a heart at peace. And we remain as sinful and selfish as we have always been, especially when it comes to this theological war on LGBTQIA inclusion. ...

Now, Biblically what do you do when you know you have sinned and fallen short. Well, Biblically we clothe ourselves in sackcloth and ashes, and we enter into a deep period of confession and repentance. I've been struck by

Continued on insert page



Pastor

Lynn Westover

Preschool Director

Wendy Finley

**Music Director/
Accompanist**

Paul Cady

Certified Lay Minister

Grace Leighton

**Administrative
Assistant**

Julie Mosley

Courier Editor

Sharon Mountford



Resident Bishop

Grant Hagiya

**North District
Superintendent**

Rev. Jim Powell



Summer Calendar

Weekly Activities

- Sunday Peace Evangelical Church, Hall, 9:30 am
Hindi Urdu UMC, Sanctuary, 5:00 pm
- Monday Valley Harmonettes Rehearsal, Lounge 10:30 am
Cub Pack, Scout Room, 7:00 pm
Monday Narcotics Anonymous, Parlor, 8:00 pm
- Tuesday Shower Ministry, 8:30 - 11:00 am
Boy Scouts, Scout Room, 7:00 pm
Narcotics Anonymous, Parlor, 7:30 pm
- Wednesday Men's Stag AA meeting, Parlor, 7:00 pm
- Thursday Choir rehearsal, Choir Room, 7:30 pm
Narcotics Anonymous Study Group, Lounge, 6:30 pm
- Friday Girl Scouts, for details email: gsav11896@gmail.com

July Birthdays

- 3 Patricia Rowe
9 Maria Cruz
11 Roger Johnson
12 Gerald Rowe
16 Judith Austin
Guy Maturo, Jr.
19 Shirley Thomson
22 Dylan Bautista
23 Nanette Roberson
24 Anneliese Laguna
27 Elmo Maiden
29 Talia Maturo
30 Devon Cates
Elma Villacisneros

July Anniversaries

- 7 Louis & Sharon
Mountford
15 Robin & Ricky Abernathy
26 Robert & Flo Lamb

*If your special day is missing,
please contact the church office.*



ALTAR FLOWERS

For July

- 7 Judith Austin and Karen
Grengs, "Happy Birthday
America"
14 Open
21 Open
28 Open

*Please remember that you can
dedicate the altar flowers for any
Sunday in honor or memory of a
special event.*

Other Activities in July

- Wednesday 4 Independence Day, office closed
- Saturday 6 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Denny's, 8:30 am
Frank's Weiler's Deli, 8:30 am, 21161 Victory, C.P.
- Tuesday 9 Administrative Committee, Library, 7:00 pm
- Thursday 11 Bookends Circle, Library, 9:30 am
Sarah Circle, Denny's, 9:30 am
22027 Burbank Blvd., just West of Topanga Canyon
- Wednesday 17 Faith, Hope & Love, Olive Garden, 6:30 pm

Other Activities in August

- Saturday 3 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Denny's, 8:30 am
Frank's Weiler's Deli, 8:30 am, 21161 Victory, C.P.
- Thursday 8 Bookends Circle, Lunch out, TBA
Sarah Circle, 9:30 am
22027 Burbank Blvd., just West of Topanga Canyon
- Sunday 11 Valley Harmonettes Concert, Sanctuary, 2:00 pm
- Tuesday 13 Administrative Committee, Library, 7:00 pm
- Thursday 15 Courier Deadline for September issue
- Tuesday 21 Faith, Hope and Love Circle, No meeting
- Saturday 24 Boy Scout District Yard Sale, Church lawn
Time and information on how to donate items TBD

Upcoming in September

- Saturday 7 Men's Fellowship Breakfast, Denny's, 8:30 am
Frank's Weiler's Deli, 8:30 am, 21161 Victory Blvd, C.P.



Cal- Pacific Conference UMW

“Women of Distinction”

Fashion Show / High Tea Party Saturday,

August 24, 2019

Glendale First UMC. Cost \$40.00

Circle Meetings

July

Bookends: Thursday, July 11 at 9:30 am in the Library. The book entitled *The Immortalists* by Chloe Benjamin will be reviewed by Doris Hood. Lynne German will be Hostess & give Devotions.

Sarah Circle: Thursday, July 11 at 9:30 am. – Breakfast at Denny’s Restaurant, Burbank off Topanga Canyon Blvd.

Faith, Hope & Love: Wednesday, July 17, 6:30 pm, Olive Garden.

August

Bookends: Thursday, August 8 – Lunch Out, TBA

Sarah Circle: Thursday, August 8 – Breakfast at Denny’s Restaurant, Burbank Blvd. off Topanga Canyon Blvd.

Faith, Hope & Love: No Meeting

Future Meetings

UMW Mission Team:

Thursday, September 5th, 10:00 am, Room 10.

UMW General Meeting:

Thursday, September 19th 9:30 am in the church library. *Program is the World Thank Offering.*

UMW North District Annual Celebration:

Saturday, September 21st. TBA.

Vacancy on UMW Mission Team

Social Action / Mission Education Coordinator



Looking completely at ease at the head of the table at a recent meeting of the Faith, Hope and Love Circle is Shawn Alvarado.



August Birthdays

- 1 Grace Leighton
- 2 Sabra Pittenger
- 4 Grant Simmons
- 5 Lee Smith
- 8 Irene Miller
- 12 Helen Robertson
- 15 Charlotte Girvan
Tim O’Connor
- 16 Dean Lottman
- 18 Johnny Ramirez
- 19 Liz Rogers
- 20 Nick Aiani
- 26 Mary Beth Godwin
- 29 Jennifer Alderman

August Anniversaries

- 4 Ken & Lori Dimmick
- 7 Stan & Cathy Plucinik
- 21 Jeff & Grace Leighton
- 27 Don & Evelyn Heim

If your special day is missing, please contact the church office.



ALTAR FLOWERS

For August

- 4 Open
- 11 Open
- 18 Open
- 24 PJ Umphres *in memory of*
Wally Umphres



Pastor Lynn Reappointed

Pastor Lynn returns to First UMC of Canoga Park for an eighth year, for which she and Stan are grateful. It is good to serve the Lord together.

UMW Special Mission Recognition ... George Miller

A suggestion was made fourteen years ago by a member of the United Methodist Women's Mission Team that a man be recognized from our congregation by awarding him a UMW Special Mission Recognition Award for his hard work, volunteerism and dedication. There are a number of dedicated men currently in our church who spend numerous hours volunteering their time to make our church the best possible place in which to worship. Their many and varied gifts are appreciated and we say thank you to each one of you.

This year's recipient, George Miller was born in 1931 in Brooklyn, New York. His sister, Jane, was born a few years later. George attended elementary school in Connecticut, but later his family moved to Vermont, where he attended Rutland High School where he formed lifelong friendships. He attended the University of Vermont, graduating with a degree in Electrical Engineering. George to this day has maintained close contacts with his schoolmates. He attended all high school reunions and even organized one himself from California. He did the same with many college reunions. He has a deep affection for New England and Vermont in particular. He still has cousins in Massachusetts and Maine and makes a point of visiting them periodically .

The day after graduating from UVM in 1953 he and a classmate packed up his car and drove to California - quite an adventure for a New England boy. He received a Howard Hughes Fellowship which allowed him to work part time at Hughes Aircraft and pursue a master's degree in Electrical Engineering at UCLA. While at UCLA he met his wife Shirley Laborde. They subsequently married in 1955 and made their home in Mar Vista. Later they moved to the San Fernando Valley and raised their three children, Karen, Kraig and Kurt . Shirley taught school and George worked at Hughes for 6 years.



*Shirley Thomson and George Miller
9 June 2019*

George then went to work for Litton Data Systems. Tragically, Shirley lost her battle with cancer. George then focused his attention on his three children and his work at Litton. He was a part of the burgeoning aerospace defense industry and visited countries around the world.

In 1980 he married Irene who always considered herself extremely fortunate to have become a part of such a special

family. The family has grown to include spouses, eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren. After 37 years George retired from Litton as Vice President of Program Management. He enjoys his retirement with his family, travelling and, of course, golf.

In 1988 he and Irene moved to West Hills. At one point he felt the need for a faith-based home. After visiting several congregations, George decided to join First United Methodist Church of Canoga Park where he was baptized by Gary Dickey, our pastor at the time. He embraced his church family, warmed by the welcoming atmosphere and fellowship he found there. He has delighted in having his family come together over the years to the church barbecue and he has enjoyed bringing the hot dishes to many potlucks, and helping in the maintenance of the church where he could. He was comforted by the prayers, said in honor of his beloved youngest son, Kurt, who was lost so young. This loving community has meant a great deal to him.

Since joining the church , George has served on many of the committees such as Administrative Committee, Lay Leadership, Property and Upkeep, Membership, Staff Parish and Preschool Board. He has served as head usher and a counter as well as helping with Memorial Garden projects. We are very grateful for his years of volunteer services.



Dual Baptism

On 9 June, Pastor Lynn was delighted to baptise Kennedy and Kurt Kolander, children of Spencer and Ashton Kolander.

The family is seen to the left with grandparents George and Irene Miller.



- Juanita Woolard
- Bob & Dawn Hromadka
- George & Karen Grengs
- Nancy Summer
- Virgene Engberg
- Mary Beth Godwin
- Jan Fenske
- Jackie Dutcher
- Jim and Marie Smith
- Charlotte Girvan
- Ted Stanwood
- Joan Kelley
- Jean Smith
- Jane Bayless
- Donna Nall

To receive Prayer Chain e-mails, please contact Robin Abernathy at robingreenbird@yahoo.com "cc" the church office at crossandflame@att.net

Farewell to Virgene Engberg

We said farewell to Virgene on the last Sunday of May. She moved closer to family and begins a new adventure. The prayer shawl ministry sent her off with a prayer shawl, so that she would always know that God and we wrap her in love.

Virgene Engberg
1357 Redwood Circle #120
Grants Pass, OR 97527
(541)226-9984
(818)346-6320 cell#

Roster Update

Jeff & Grace Leighton
7311 Nita Ave.
Canoga Park, CA 91303

Shower Ministry

Thank you for signing up to help provide food on Tuesday mornings. Sign up on the bulletin board in the parlor.

Transportation Ministry

If you need a ride to church events, or if you are interested in becoming a driver for the transportation ministry, please contact JoAnn Chadwick-Ellis at 818-280-6441 or Mary Mackay at 818-346-5872.



Preschool News

We had 18 students graduate at our end on the year program! It was a very special day. Our Summer school session will run June 18th thru July 25th. We will start our Fall session on August 13th.

Wendy

Preschool Program

Preschool children and their families gathered on 7 June to celebrate the end-of-the-year. One hundred sixty-four (164) people filled the sanctuary with excitement. Students graduating to kindergarten were recognized and shared the following, When I grow up I want to be..... Some answers were:

I want to be an astronaut.

I want to be a builder.

I want to be a cotton-candy store owner.

I want to be a doctor.

I want to be a farmer.

I want to be a mom.

I want to be a princess.

I want to be a pro-hockey player.

I want to be sheep-keeper.

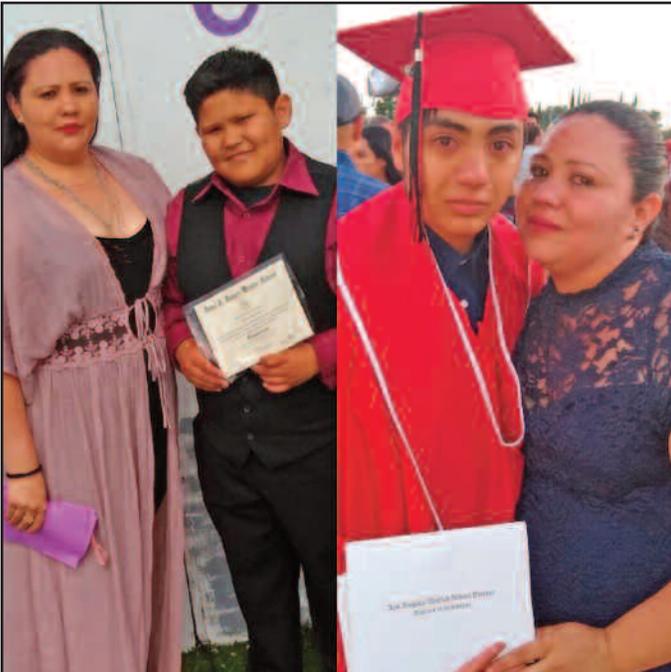


You are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items on the first Sunday of every month.

Your much-appreciated contributions are taken to the West Valley Food Pantry for distribution to their clients.



Congratulations are in Order



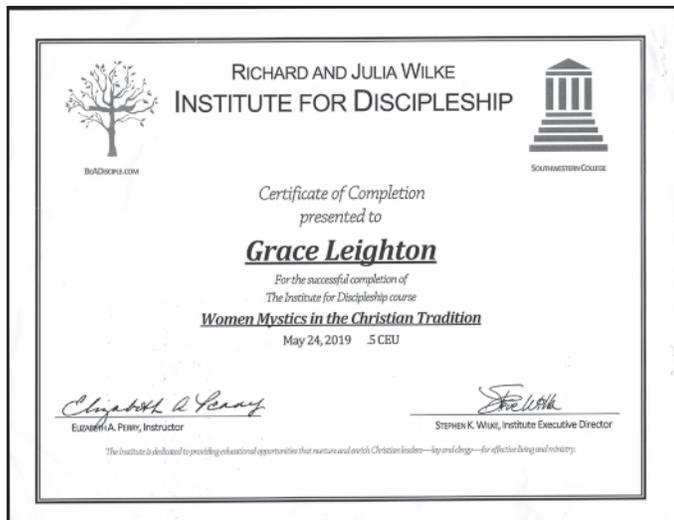
Two Graduations

Shawn M. Alvarado graduated from Cleveland High School on June 6. He will not be attending college next year. He wants to take time to work and hopefully in the future he will decide to go back to school.

Dylan Bautista graduated from Sutter Middle School on June 7. Dylan will be attending Cleveland High School in August.

I'm super proud of my boys. *Marcela Rodriguez*

Grace Leighton



Jackie Robertson Gardner

My painting took first place in the adult category at the 2019 EEC Environmental Art AIR Contest. That was a pretty neat feeling! Dad, Marcy, and Josh all came out.

The painting is titled *One Night Only*, named for the Cereus cactus that blooms one night a month in the summer under the full moon.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF CANOGA PARK

22700 Sherman Way
West Hills, CA 91307-2396

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Canoga Park, CA
Permit #1



Two ways to make your on-line purchases benefit the church

Amazon Smile

Designate Canoga Park First United Methodist Church for Amazon Charity. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the church.

Start your shopping at smile.amazon.com.

Select a charity.

Select pick your own charitable organization.

Enter Canoga Park First United Methodist Church.
Click Search

On the next screen, select Canoga Park First United Methodist Church

That's it. You must always start at smile.amazon.com to support Canoga Park First United Methodist Church.



UMCmarket

This online portal is designed for United Methodists to shop online at a variety of retailers

who will donate to our local church. A percentage of every dollar you spend is contributed to the church.

Visit umcmarket.org, establish your free, online account and support your church with every online purchase you make at these participating retailers.

this image that Bishop Gregory Palmer delivered in his Episcopal Address in 2016 of clergy prostrating themselves in ordination, of being on our knees asking for forgiveness from God, and I need to be on my knees right now to confess my own sinfulness before God. [Bishop kneels in confession.]

O God, gracious and loving, I confess that I have not had a heart at peace when it comes to the church's stance on LGBTQIA inclusion. I humbly confess on behalf of the whole church that no matter what side we're on theologically on this issue, we have done great harm to the most vulnerable among us. We have told LGBTQIA people that they are not acceptable to you and put at risk our young people who identify this way by destroying their self-image and leading to acts of self-harm, self-destruction and even suicide. Forgive me, O Lord, for being a part of this corporate action. Forgive me for not doing enough. I ask for your forgiveness and healing to make things right. Amen.

Now, we'd like you to join in a corporate prayer of confession. [After a corporate prayer of confession, the bishop returned to the pulpit.] ... I remind you the spirit must not be just for the moment. But we have to practice this again and again in the coming days.

As we move to naming our present reality, let me return to the Isaiah 43 passage. We are reminded that these words come to a community still in exile in Babylon. ... These are words addressed to a captive people, [many of whom] had given up any hope ... of coming home. The fact that Second Isaiah argues that God will deliver them means that the opposite view was held by many, that they had given up any hope of return. ... Thus, some of us mirror the people in exile, giving up any hope that the church will change for the better, and even leaving the church, because of its current stance. ... Second Isaiah then moves us from the past ... to the present. "For your sake I will come to Babylon and breakdown all the bars."

In naming our present reality as the United Methodist Church, we cannot live in this state of

tension and division very long. No one is happy where we are – Traditionalists, Centrists or Progressive. Something has to break forth for our church or we will explode from within.

Our system of polity which has served us in the past cannot deal with this one issue. And we have to realize that our present understanding of how the church operates will not work for this particular dilemma we are facing. The sooner we come to this reality, the quicker we can move on to something constructive and life-giving. We cannot be afraid of change, because without a change we will destroy each other inside.

In Jesus' own words in Matthew 9, "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. Otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled. And the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, so both are preserved."

Folks, we have tried to live as a global church. And we've done this with integrity. But our present form of how this is practiced in polity simply does not work any longer. When 40% - and this number will increase next year at the General Conference - of Central Conference delegates makes decisions on what happens in the U. S., it makes governance untenable for all. And we must enter into a 21st century governance system that separates our global partnerships from defining each other's destinies. This can take the form of the US being its own Central Conference or many other designs but having a General Conference where everyone makes decisions for the entire denomination simply cannot work.

And what I'm arguing here for is for us to be global in missions, but contextual in governance. We should and can be in missions throughout all the world. And our global partnerships with Asia and Africa are pleasing to God. The fact that this Annual Conference ... raised \$300,000 to build a center for ministry to women and children in the East Congo is what the church is all about. But we have no business in telling East Congo how to do their ministry, just as they have no context of understanding how ministry is done in California-Pacific Annual Conference.

As hard as it is, ... perhaps now is the time for us to come to grips with the reality that a Progressive-Traditionalist split in the national or global church might be a reality. We can be affiliated in missions, but we cannot be governed by one side or the other on this particular issue. A heart at war will produce a winner and a loser. And that is not pleasing to God. Would it not be better for both sides to have a governance system that reflects the integrity of their own theological position? In our present reality, as difficult as divorce is, sometimes there really are unreconcilable differences. And a couple is better off separately than it is together. It does not have to be mean-spirited or angry or contentious or selfish.

It's simply dealing with the reality of that which is. We really are not better together than separately. Now, of course, it gets much more complicated when there are children in a divorce. That's the issue for many of us. But even then, if the divorcing couple puts the needs of the children first, if the first priority is the children, then there are possibilities for wholeness and health.

Our United Methodist children are our missions, our related institutions, our seminaries, our hospitals, all of our global partnerships across the world. If we can put those first, then we have a chance to be pleasing in God's sight and have a sense in which this will not be painful for the rest of the world.

Once again, global in missions but contextual in governance. If Traditionalists and Progressives ... can come together with a heart at peace, realizing a separation might be for the best of everyone, we can commit to be in missions together but separate in our governance systems so that all may thrive.

But the one thing I am certain of that God has placed on my heart and perhaps yours, is I believe in the California-Pacific Annual Conference. With all the talk about separation, disaffiliation and divorce, I believe that this conference can model the way of what it means to be in unity despite our differences. We have lived together for decades, despite our diversity as an Annual Conference and the differences over homosexuality. We can show the whole

denomination what it means to accept each other in love and not judge one another by trying to make them come to our side. That's what we do best in this Annual Conference. That is why I am convinced that we can lead the nation in terms of what it means.

I still haven't given up the big tent of the United Methodist Church where all can exist under the name United Methodist, but we don't try to convert each other to a position that we will not accept as our own. ...

Finally, the word of God comes directly in Second Isaiah. "I am about to do a new thing. Now it springs forth. Do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ... For I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people who I formed for myself. So that, they may declare my praise."

This is God's preferred vision for the future, folks. God is declaring to us that there will be waters and rivers in the parched desert of our church. ... We will drink from God's endless well of life-giving water. ...

Let me end by saying what I hear God calling us {to be}. We see a new church. God has moved into the neighborhood making a home for all God's people. ...

We see a new church where everyone belongs – every age and generation, every color and nationality, every sexual state and identity, every social and economic condition, every state of faith and being, every kind of family, every person longing for God's love. God's church will be a place where all will feel welcome. It will be a place we know as home, and people will feel valued and loved as the children of God. ... We are the people of the United Methodist Church, and the California-Pacific Annual Conference, and we have a kin-dom to build for all of God's children! Can you see it? Can you taste it? Can you hear it coming?

Let the future church come now. Let it come now. Let it come now.