



FIRST PALO ALTO
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

INSIGHTS

OCTOBER 2022

soup's ON! October 2

We are reviving our soup-and-bread lunch tradition on **World Communion Sunday**, Oct. 2.

This will be a special service, with Pastor Loni and First Tongan Church joining us, and Pastor Doug giving his final sermon of his 7-week stay with us.

Plan to stay after worship to enjoy lunch on the patio. If you can contribute rolls or a sliced loaf of bread to accompany our variety of soups, that would be terrific!

World Communion Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday in October around the world, promoting unity among all Christian churches regardless of denomination.

World Communion Sunday is also a special giving day in the United Methodist Church. Your special offering on World Communion Sunday supports racial and ethnic students in achieving their educational goals while also transforming communities. Donate at our church or online at ResourceUMC.org/SSGive. ❖

God's Church, Our Future

by Lou Bellardo

We launched our Fall Finance Campaign Sunday, Sept. 25. Tom Fingar gave the “kick off” presentation and Pastor Doug Norris shared his views and outlook during the sermon. Our slogan this year, “God’s Church, Our Future,” aptly summarizes our understanding. First United Methodist Church of Palo is God’s Church and it’s up to all of us to shape and share in its future.

Over the past two months, we’ve been very blessed to have Doug and Ellie Norris back among us. We have been inspired, reenergized, and encouraged by their presence. Their ministry has included challenging and welcomed sermons, meeting with and listening to members, *and* at home visits with shut-ins.

Our Fall Finance Campaign will run during the month of October. You can expect to receive two letters with Estimates of Giving cards from Tom and Doug.

There will be lay witness messages from the lectern on three Sundays—Oct. 9, 16 and 23. Our estimate of giving cards will be consecrated during the worship service Sunday, Oct. 30.

During the current campaign, each of us will have the opportunity to hear and learn about our collective future in this church, God’s Church. We urge you to pray and consider how you can contribute to this future. ❖



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In Crisis

An excerpt from the Sept. 21 sermon by Douglas Norris

Based on my observations these past several weeks, our church has trouble with forgiveness. There are strained relationships. Our church is in crisis. I wonder how many have left our church because we can't get along with each other? How many have left because of hurt feelings over what someone said or did and they couldn't forgive? They jumped ship rather than forgive. Some left because of what a pastor said or did. I have had people leave the church because of something I said. Forgive your pastors. If you can't do it in person, forgive in your heart.



We have suffered crises before. In the 70's we lost half the church, but we survived. Let us now together not only survive, but thrive. We must get along. We need each other. Together we serve. "We are one in the spirit, we are one in the Lord."

How do we turn the church around? How do we thrive? We begin with forgiveness. Who do you need to forgive? Go up to them, or visit them, or phone them, "We need to talk." And then say, "I forgive you," and mean it!

Besides asking for forgiveness, who do you need to ask to forgive you for what you said or did?

Forgiving others and being forgiven means to let go of the hurt. Let it go and let them be. Let them be obnoxious or obstructive. Let them be themselves.

You can't live another person's life. You can't manipulate, coerce, or decide for another person. You can only control yourself. You can only decide how you will live in relation to them. If you refuse to forgive, the bitterness, anger and hurt will cripple you, not them. Let them be themselves. Let the hurt go.

We have dedicated leaders and workers who because of loyalty and love for our church, are outdoing themselves, but they can't last forever. How do we thrive? How can we turn this church around?

Paul told us how in Colossians 3:12-15, "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love which binds everything together in perfect harmony." ❖

In 90° heat, family ministries hosted an evening of Stanford football, Sept. 3.



Hot Game! Stanford 41, Colgate 10. Go Cardinals!
Photos by Pamela Cutkosky





Team to Join the Walk to End Alzheimer's

First UMC Palo Alto is once again sending a team to the Walk to End Alzheimer's in San Jose, Oct. 15. The Walk to End Alzheimer's is the largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support, and research.

Help us make a difference by donating to one of our team members through the Alzheimer's Association website: https://bit.ly/FUMCPA-Alz-Walk_2022.

We'd be very happy to have you join us on this very fun walk, which begins at 10 a.m. Oct. 15.

Questions? Contact Robert Lasater at rlasater@hotmail.com or Linda Grossman at planaap@aol.com or 650-369-7333.



All funds raised through the Walk support the Alzheimer's Association, and all donations are tax-deductible. ❖

Calling All Kids to Trunk-or-Treat!

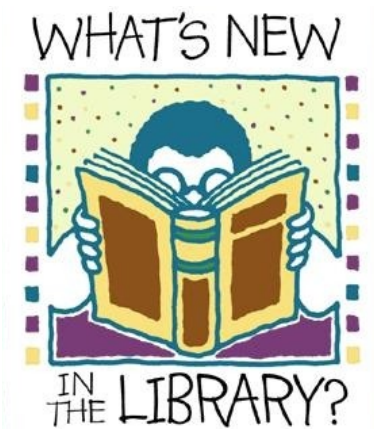
Trunk-or-treat is a safe trick-or-treating experience in our church parking lot. It is a great opportunity to invite our friends and neighbors to visit our church. We will have a table with activities for the children and a table with information about other activities in our church for parents and other people who come to participate in the event.

We are also looking for adults to "volunteer" their cars and trunks. The Children, Youth, and Families Ministry will provide the candies, we just need the cars. To volunteer or for more info, email Pastor Gerardo at cyfministriest@firstpaloalto.com. ❖



Help Us Spread the Word about Music and Meditation in Our Sanctuary on Thursdays

Opening our sanctuary from 12:30 to 1:00 each Thursday afternoon is our gift to the nearby community. We want to share the beauty of our sanctuary and the evocative music Diane Keller creates on our organ with neighbors in Palo Alto. There is no service or ritual, just an opportunity to quiet the mind and escape for a few minutes from the busy pressure of everyday life. Please do what you can to let nearby friends and neighbors know about this weekly meditation time. ❖

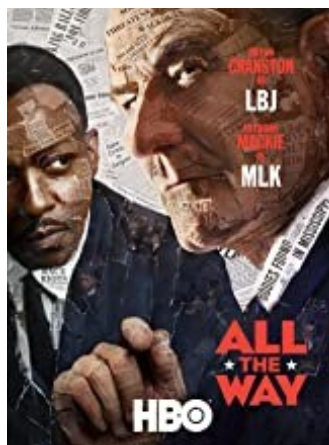


This month's memoir recommendations are courtesy of Library Committee member Linda Suzuki—thank you, Linda!

Rinker Buck, author of *Life on the Mississippi*, is a historian with a passion for hands-on exploration. After traversing the Oregon Trail in a covered wagon, he attempts to raft down the Mississippi River Huck Finn-style while chronicling his journey in this memoir. The St. Louis Dispatch calls *Life on the Mississippi* “a rich mix of history, reporting, and personal introspection.”

Like a Rolling Stone is a memoir by Rolling Stone founder and co-editor Jann Wenner, offering insight into “the music, the politics, and the lifestyle of ... the age of rock and roll.” The book delves into the work of world-changing artists and the legendary interviews with political figures that made Rolling Stone famous, while giving the reader a view of the music industry and popular culture that goes far beyond “behind the scenes.”

As always, happy reading First UMC Palo Alto! ❖



Film Group Still Watching ...

Early in the pandemic, the Social Action Team began suggesting films for viewing and discussion. A group of film buffs formed and has been watching and discussing films weekly since March 2020. Many people have been asking for a list of the films. Here is a partial list—more to come next month.

A Tuba to Cuba
 All the Way (with LBJ)
 Allegiance
 Always Jane
 American Factory
 An Officer and a Gentleman
 Arrival
 Au Hasard Balthazar
 Belfast
 Bending the Arc
 Benediction
 Between the World and Me
 Billie
 Billy Eliot
 Black Wall Street
 Bombshell: Hedy Lamarr
 Bonhoeffer
 Bowling for Columbine
 Capernaum
 Citizen Ashe
 CODA
 College Behind Bars
 Concrete Cowboy
 Crip Camp

Crossroads
 Daughters of the Dust
 Dead Man Walking
 De-Lovely
 Doctors Without Borders
 Enchanto
 Entertaining Angels: Dorothy Day
 Finding Your Roots
 Freedom Writers
 Genghis Blues
 Get Out
 Hamilton
 Harriet
 I Am Not Your Negro
 Ida
 Indian Matchmaking
 Just Mercy
 Jim Thorpe All American
 King in the Wilderness
 Life After Lockup
 Lilies of the Field
 Living in Emergency
 Love It Was Not
 Ma Rainey's Black Bottom ❖



What Does Your Ideal Church Look Like?

by Pamela Cutkosky, SPRC Chair

You've heard the expression: "Be the change you want to see in the world."

If you want the world to be kinder, model kindness.

If you want the world to be more just, act with fairness and stand up to injustice.

When it comes to our church: "Be the church you want to be part of."

In a spiritual exercise, your Staff Parish Relations Committee shared their thoughts about the church they wanted to be part of—and create. The exercise is simple: Complete the sentence "I want to be part of a church where ...

Here's what we said—and what we commit ourselves to doing and being to create the church we want to be part of.

"I want to be part of a church where ...

... women and children are listened to with full respect and treated as equals."

... we do things to help people in the community."

... members build each other up."

... members negotiate willingly to agree on meeting a challenge."

... it is inclusive."

... I find peace, solace, and happiness for myself and my family."

... people are loving, tolerant, and cooperative."

How would you finish the sentence?

"I want to be part of a church where ... ❖

In Search Of: Two Childcare Attendants for the Nursery

We are preparing to reopen the nursery for childcare during the Sunday School and worship hours. This means a thorough post-pandemic cleaning of the room and the toys, removing some storage items, and hiring two childcare attendants to staff the nursery on Sunday mornings.



A job description is on our website under Careers, firstpalalto.com/careers/. If you know anyone who would be interested, please contact chair Pamela Cutkosky or a member of Staff Parish Relations Committee or Susan Stephens in the office. These are part-time positions for 2.5-3 hours on Sunday mornings. We appreciate any assistance you can provide to help us staff the nursery and reopen soon! ❖

A Heartfelt Thank You to Pastor Doug and Ellie

On behalf of the whole congregation, the Staff Parish Relations Committee thanks Pastor Doug and Ellie Norris for their love, care, and commitment to the members of First United Methodist Church over the past seven weeks.

Pastor Debra's long medical leave has left us rudderless at times, and Doug and Ellie drove from Arizona to provide us with leadership and continuity at a time when we needed it most. We are so grateful for the connection they have maintained with our church through the years and for their willingness to drop everything in Arizona to serve our church once again.

Oct. 2, World Communion Sunday, is their last Sunday with us. Come for worship, stay for soup-and-bread lunch on the patio, and say your own thanks and farewell to the Norrises before they return to Arizona. ❖

Women Connecting to Each Other, and to the Church

From the UWF national office:

“Assembly was held in May 2022. Assembly is a celebratory gathering hosted every four years by United Women in Faith, bringing thousands of women together for worship, learning, and connection. The first Assembly was held by the Women’s Society of Christian Service in Columbus, Ohio. The Methodist Episcopal Church had recently reunited with the Methodist Episcopal Church-South and the Methodist Protestant Church to become the Methodist Church in 1939. But that denominational merger was not without loss. The “compromise” that brought the northern and southern Methodists together was the establishment of the Central Jurisdiction, a separate jurisdiction for Black Methodists to keep the Methodist church racially segregated.

Assembly 2018 returned to Columbus, Ohio, not only to celebrate our organization’s 150th anniversary but to honor the decision of the first Assembly planners to hold the inaugural Assembly in a place that allowed Black members to stay in the same hotels as white members, moving the event from St. Louis to Columbus for this reason. The women not only stood up against racist state laws but against the church itself and held an integrated gathering.

This year was the 20th quadrennial Assembly—and the first as United Women in Faith. It was held just a few weeks after a splinter group within the United Methodist Church started its own denomination, just a few months after the decision-making United Methodist General Conference was again postponed. And yet, again, the women of the church offered hope in the face of hurt and loss. Hope, as United Women in Faith, a new name and a new look to ensure the work of hope continues. We’re still here, and can’t wait to

expand our sisterhood and continue to grow God’s kin-dom.”

—Tara Barnes, editor *RESPONSE*

At the Assembly:

“We have a moral responsibility to refrain from being wasteful and to use our resources wisely. It’s a moral responsibility to care for every community as if it were our own community that is at risk. It’s a moral responsibility to value the balance of nature on this planet. We have a moral responsibility to care for future generations We’re facing a challenge of our lifetime: climate change. As I speak with you, families have been evacuated from wildfire zones, storms have ravaged our coastal communities, and people struggling with homelessness and underserved communities face death caused by extreme weather. Every community faces the costs associated with the pain and heartache that those events bring. But all of you know that not every community has the resources to rebuild or even relocate when a climate event happens in their backyard.

Every community deserves clean air and water and access to good paying union jobs ... Your focus during this Assembly recognizes this mission in a pivotal moment. And your voices in the faith space are critically important. Your advocacy turns up the volume on the moral responsibility we have to each other and to our earth. Keep it up.”

—Deb Haaland, U. S. Secretary of the Interior, speaking at the Assembly in Columbus, Ohio in May, 2022 ♦





by Nancy Olson

U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, addressed members of the recent United Women in Faith (aka UMW) Assembly. I have included her remarks in my United Women in Faith article (page 6). I encourage you to read it. The United Women in Faith have historically focused on environmental justice and sustainability issues as they directly impact women and children—adding climate change issues in recent years.

“This we know: The earth does not belong to us, we belong to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. We did not weave the web of life; we are merely strands in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.” —Chief Seattle, 1786–1866

Faith leaders understand the importance of using their voices to call the faithful to live by their most deeply-held values. In an election year, voting is one way that we can bring forth a world rooted in those values—values of justice, hope, courage, and love for all of God’s creation, our sacred Earth. But to do this, we need to make sure that people of faith are voting. That starts with our congregations. (I attended a meeting of interfaith leaders from Christian, Jewish, and Islamic congregations who led a discussion about encouraging their faith communities to vote by “offering sermons, divrei Torah, and khutbahs on the importance of voting.” I, of course, was convinced.) Be sure to study your ballot to understand what you are being asked to vote on—then please vote.

The Canadian government announced that it will ban the manufacture and import of most single-use plastic products. In the U.S., local jurisdictions such as New York City, and Palo Alto, and some states from Virginia to California have imposed plastic bans. But as a whole, the country has yet to enact any comprehensive legislation to minimize plastic pollution, despite our nations’s enormous plastic pollution problem.

Plastic pollutes our air and water every step of the way—from when manufacturers make it from fossil fuels to when we toss it, often after using it only once. Nothing we use for a few minutes should damage

our health and environment so profoundly.

Following advocacy by environmental groups, a number of leading U.S. clothing brands have now committed to ridding their products of PFAS, a family of toxic ‘forever’ chemicals that have been linked to serious health risks, from cancer to kidney disease. These promises from name brands like Patagonia, American Eagle, and Ralph Lauren, signal a major shift in the apparel industry to take meaningful action and tackle what has become a mounting public health threat. PFAS chemicals are pervasive, mobile, and long-lasting in the environment. They are particularly prevalent in the clothing and textile industries where they are often used to make water and stain resistant products, such as outerwear favored by outdoor enthusiasts. When buying new winter wear for yourself or as gifts, please read garment labels carefully. A friendly guide to PFAS in clothing can be found at nrdc.org/pfas. ❖

Update to Lay Officers for the Coming Year

Bud Buttrill was elected president by the Board of Trustees. Brian Steen will act as VP and Bill Nicholls will be corporate secretary of the board. Church Council approved Rick Allen as authorized agent on the Security Task Force. ❖



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

10/13/2018 Joseph Witte and
Caety Chong
10/19/2019 Maurine and Kai
Tong
10/21/1995 Dave Gee and Angela
Chen



Finance Update

The Finance Committee thanks you for your generous and gracious support and requests that you continue to keep your pledges current. Please direct inquiries to Lou Bellardo: lou@bellardo.com

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

10/01 Chuck Hebel	10/17 Trish Riley
10/02 Carol Chatfield	10/20 George Merritt- Calvin, III
10/04 Kaitlin Medeiros	10/22 John Baglin
10/05 Emilie Sweet	10/22 Monti Sauermann
10/05 Olivia Gee	10/23 Nancy Larson
10/06 Keith Ferguson	10/24 Dail Koehler
10/06 Bing Wei	10/24 Dan Conway
10/06 Sean Kurian	10/24 Margaret Branyon- Goodman
10/07 John Jordan	10/24 Alyssa Gee
10/09 Mary Lu Wood	10/25 Tim Crockett
10/09 Eliana Herbert-Paz	10/25 Kay Jacob
10/10 Ada Shelly	10/26 Lynn Gibbons
10/11 Richard Lubman	10/28 Julianne Stafford
10/13 Kristi Larson	10/28 Ilona Sparks
10/14 Kim Venaas	10/29 Patrick Riley
10/14 Ashley Owen	10/31 Eric Spangenberg
10/16 Christopher Martin	

September 2022 Income and Expense Summary	September 2022 Actual	Actual YTD 2022	Budget YTD 2022	Budget Annual 2022
Income				
Total Member Giving	12,615	260,694	155,551	311,588
Total Income All Other Sources	33,320	104,181	135,734	231,800
	45,935	364,875	291,285	543,388
Expense				
Conference Tithe	2,230	32,963	30,913	48,000
Council on Ministries	745	8,656	36,833	56,670
Staff Parish Relations	31,161	233,180	268,002	401,378
Office and Finance	1,840	10,329	16,333	24,250
Board of Trustees	7,730	103,112	137,803	203,500
Total Expenses	43,706	388,240	489,884	733,798
Excess (Deficit) of Income over Expense	2,229	-23,365	-198,599	-190,410



- 2 World Communion Sunday (special offering)
Soup and bread lunch, after worship
- 4 SPRC, 7 p.m. (Zoom)
- 11 Trustees, 7:30 p.m. (Zoom)
- 15 Walk to End Alzheimer's, 10:00 a.m. (offsite)
- 18 Finance, 7:30 p.m. (Zoom)
- 20 Insights deadline for November issue
- 22 San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, 7:30 p.m.
(free; more info at thesfco.org)
- 25 Church Council, 7:30 p.m. (Zoom)
- 29 Trunk-or-Treat, 4:30–6 p.m.
- 30 Consecration Sunday



First Tongan Church Palo Alto and First UMC Palo Alto welcomed Pastor Sepuloni Feleunga, Sept 4. Photo by Lucy Tompkin

Our electronic giving page is always open! Give with a few clicks at firstpaloalto.com/giving or text Give to 1-650-376-6784 for a link with instructions. Your generosity makes our mission possible. Thank you!



WEEKLY SCHEDULE

→ In-person worship has resumed. Worship also is live streamed. **Vaccination and face masks are required in person.** Many activities continue to meet online via Zoom, as noted.

→ The church office is open, but the doors are locked. Please phone the office—or ring the electronic door bell—to be admitted. **Masks are required.** Office hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Sundays

- 10:00 a.m. Sunday School, ages 3–11
- 10:45 a.m. Worship in person and live streamed
Check firstpaloalto.com
or Friday e-news for the link.
Snack-n-Chat, after worship

Mondays

- 7 p.m. Social Justice movie discussions
(Zoom) See e-news for details.
- 7 p.m. Fiume di Musica Rehearsal
- 7:30 p.m. Bible Study

Tuesdays

- 2 p.m. Bible Study, Channing House
- Noon Current Affairs Fellowship Group

Wednesdays

- 6:45 p.m. Upstream Bible Study and
Contemporary Worship Service

Thursdays

- 12:30 p.m. Meditation and Music
- 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Information for the next issue of the Insights newsletter is due Oct. 20.

Photos of church events are accepted at any time. Include photographer's name, date of the photo, and a brief description of the event. Everything is subject to editing. Please send your submissions via email to Insights Editor Michele W. Conway: insightsfirstpa@gmail.com or bring them to the church office. Thank you!



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FIRST PALO ALTO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Next INSIGHTs deadline: Oct. 20

