

NOVEMBER 2022

Interim Announced

Rev. Doug Norris has been appointed by the bishop and cabinet of the UMC California-Nevada Conference to be interim pastor of our church beginning Nov. 1 through June 30, 2023. A new permanent pastor will be appointed to begin in July.

Pastor Doug and Ellie, his wife, were with us for a couple of months while Pastor Debra was on medical leave.

Please extend a warm "Welcome Back" to Pastor Doug and Ellie. ❖

Remembering Our Saints on Nov. 13

Worship on Sunday, Nov. 13, will be our All Saints Day service, when we remember the saints of First UMC Palo Alto and our loved ones who have gone on before us.

You are invited to bring photographs of your loved ones to place on tables at the front of the sanctuary.

We will chime the bells and read the names of those in our church community who died in the past year. The Chancel Choir and Fiume musicians will provide special music. •

I Like It Here!

by Douglas Norris

Ellie and I are humbled by the generous Love Gift! Thank you! Your affirmation is very much appreciated for the eight weeks with you and now as we begin an eight-month Interim.



Welcome Back!

We are grateful for the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Trustees furnishing the parsonage for our use. We are not able to bring anything with us so we will use the Love Gift to supplement what is provided.

As I look ahead, I see five priorities for my ministry with the goal of preparing the church for a permanent pastor July 1.

- 1) Preaching and Worship leadership
- 2) Provide pastoral care—visiting/contacting homebound, those in senior/assisted living, those with special needs, counseling
- 3) Provide strong leadership for reconciliation, referee conflicts, offer ideas and challenges, seek cooperation and unity
- 4) Research how to restructure the organization of the church
- 5) Long-range vision and planning

To accomplish these tasks will require a lot of person-power, undergirded with prayer. Please pray for me and our church.

How do you see yourself involved in these priorities? Email me at douginorris@gmail.com or phone me at the church (650/323-6167) with suggestions of how you might participate.

You can even help with #1. I am planning to begin a weekly Sermon Scripture Study where we together will discuss the Scripture lesson for the upcoming sermon and solicit your ideas and illustrations.

In other words, we are all in the ministry together! We all are part of the Body of Christ, the Church. ❖

625 Hamilton Avenue Palo Alto, CA 94301-2016 650-323-6167 Fax: 650-323-3923 www.FirstPaloAlto.com

Still Time to Donate to the Alzheimer's Walk

Thanks to all First UMC Palo Alto members, family, and friends who supported our team's fundraising this year. As of the Insights deadline, we had received donations of \$3367.

If you'd like to contribute via the Alzheimer's Association secure website, it's not too late. All funds raised through the Walk support the Alzheimer's Association, and all donations are tax-deductible.

https://bit.ly/FUMCPA-Alz-Walk 2022 �



Walkers gathered in San Jose Oct. 15 for the annual walk to raise funds for Alzheimer's care, support, and research. Photo by Tim Crockett





by Michele W. Conway, Insights Editor

Our church is in a time of transition. Who are we now? Where are we going? What will we become?

This transition is like a twosided coin. On one side, we

need to support our interim pastoral team throughout the transition period until a new permanent pastor is assigned.

On the other side, we need to support each other through the transition period so that we are ready to begin a new journey with a new pastor next July.

Both our interim pastoral team and our congregation need YOU during this time. Here are some ideas for how you can help:

Pray. Pray for Pastor Doug and Ellie—for strength, wisdom, health, and more. Pray the same for each other too.

Show up. Come to worship. Participate in events and meetings. Tell others about your love of Christ and the church. Invite them to join you for worship or a church event.

Give. Continue to support the church and its missions financially.

Serve. Where do you fit in the church's ministry? Find your role and fill it faithfully and gracefully.

Love. Be aware of each other's struggles and find ways to help.

Believe. Be open to new ideas. Change is in our future. We can adapt. We can thrive.

Encourage. Say thank you. Send notes of appreciation. Notice people. Greet them. Honor everyone.

Rev. Ivana Prochazkova, a preacher in Prague, has said she knows her ministry is meaningful when she sees her congregation open their hearts to varied people in mutual respect and empathy.

Laurens Glass, a UMC Communications writer, tells this story: "When my great-uncle died, three different pastors made the drive to speak at his funeral. A quiet and humble man, he had made their jobs easier simply by taking on the tasks that no one else would. From cleanup to chairing committees, he had been the one person they could count on when no one else stepped up, but until his eulogy, no one knew the impact he had made by having such a deep commitment to the life of his church."

As she says, "You may not feel you have a particular talent like music or financial skills to offer, but your time and attention may be the greatest gift of all." �

Joy of Giving: Call for Candidates

Through the Joy of Giving fundraising, there will be six nonprofit organizations featured this upcoming Christmas season to receive donations. We are reaching out for candidates to include in the list of six nonprofits this year. If you are involved with a worthy nonprofit or know of one you really admire, please send us information for it to be considered by the Social Action Team.

Our deadline for consideration is Friday, Nov. 11.

The information we need from you is:

- Name, location, and mission of the organization
- Reasons why you are recommending it and your contact person, if available.
- · Link to their listing on Charity Navigator

Please send your candidate to Nancy Glaser: GlaserNancy@gmail.com

The Joy of Giving is a Christmas tradition at First UMC Palo Alto; an opportunity to show Christ's love to people in our local community and around the world. ❖





Are You Ready to Deck the Halls?

This year, the Sunday after Thanksgiving—Nov. 27—is the first Sunday of Advent. That means we'll be decorating the sanctuary in our annual Deck the Halls work morning on Saturday, Nov. 26.

Deck the Halls

9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 26

Breakfast treats provided

Come for an hour or three to help hang wreaths, string lights, haul trees into position, and get our worship space ready for Advent and Christmas.

For questions or more information, contact Mira Dabrowski or Pamela Cutkosky or call the church office. �

United Methodist Student Day Is Nov. 28

Sunday, Nov. 28, is United Methodist Student Day. A special offering will be collected. The funds received from the offering go into the United Methodist Student Loan Fund to underwrite scholarships for United Methodist students. Please give generously. By investing in our students, the Church supports potential in young people who will one day pay the investment forward to society.

Learn more at www.gbhem.org.

INSIGHTS November 2022 3

Gratitude Journal

I will thank God

... for the glory of the thunder, for the mystery of music, the singing of birds and the laughter of children.

... for the awe of the sunset, the beauty of flowers, the smile of friendship and the look of love

... for the leaves on the trees in spring and autumn, for the witness of the leafless trees through the winter, teaching us that death is sleep and not destruction, for the sweetness of flowers and the scent of hav.

Truly, oh Lord, the earth is full of thy riches!

And yet how much more I will thank and praise God for the strength of my body enabling me to work, for the refreshment of sleep, for my daily bread, for the days of painless health, for the gift of my mind and the gift of my conscience, for his loving guidance of my mind ever since it first began to think, and of my heart ever since it

—Edward King, an English bishop known for working with the poor

first began to love.



Orlene Fingar (left) and Pamela Cutkosky smile (we think!) for the camera at the soup-and-bread lunch Oct. 4. Photos by Ben Conway

Reviving a World Communion Tradition

by Pamela Cutkosky

What a great time we had as we revived our soup-and-bread lunch tradition for World Communion Sunday! What a great send-off for Pastor Doug and Ellie Norris after two months of ministry with us.

Many thanks to soup chefs
Michele Conway, Nancy Glaser,
Carol Kumer, Patty Bellardo,
Pamela Cutkosky, and Orlene
Fingar from First UMC Palo
Alto and Mele Kulu from First
Tongan UMC for the delicious
soups. Such variety! Vegetable,
corned beef, butternut squash,
vegan garden vegetable, carrot



and ginger, split pea, and chicken vegetable.

Thanks to Mike McCartney, the Norrises, the Bellardos, the Fingars, Peter Colby (with PB&J), Lucy Tompkin, Lois Hammar, Nancy Olson—and those who did so anonymously—for contributing breads and rolls.

Special thanks to Sandra Florstedt, who handled the cookies; Linda Grossman, who cleaned up the kitchen; and soup servers Carol Kumer, Nancy Glaser, Lou and Patty Bellardo. ❖



New Beginnings

by Pamela Cutkosky, Staff Parish Relations Chair

We begin this month with a pastoral transition. UMC California-Nevada Conference Interim Bishop Dyck and the cabinet have appointed Rev. Doug Norris as our interim pastor effective Nov. 1. He and his wife Ellie will be with us for eight

months, through June 30, 2023, living in the parsonage and providing pastoral leadership and pastoral care.

Pastor Doug will help us get ready for another transition next July, when according to the District Superintendent, Samuel Hong, a permanent pastor will be appointed for our church.

Interim Bishop Dyck refers to pastor transitions as a time of "new beginnings." Pastor Doug and Ellie have a long history with our church—he was associate pastor from 1969-74 and senior pastor from 1983-93—but these upcoming eight months are a new beginning in our relationship. We need to get to know Pastor Doug and Ellie and their ministry gifts all over again!

Bishop Dyck encourages new pastors to rethink and reset priorities. What does this church need now "in order to help the congregation grow, heal, flourish, and be faithful"?

She asks us in the laity: "How can you be a better support for the success of your pastor?" That could look like better feedback, encouragement, a little TLC, gratitude.

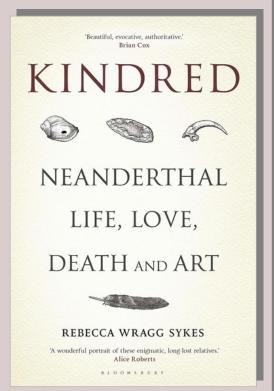
The number one duty of the Staff Parish Relations Committee is "to encourage, strengthen, nurture, support, and respect the pastor and staff and their families." We're sure everyone in the congregation will want to do that too. ❖

Hello First Palo Alto Readers!

by Charlotte Cutkosky

This month we want to highlight *Kindred: Neanderthal Life, Love, Death and Art* by Rebecca Wragg Sykes. *Kindred* was released during the pandemic to widespread acclaim. It combines the disciplines of archeology, paleontology, and anthropology to examine what we know, and what groundbreaking discoveries we've made in the past two decades, about Neanderthals.

Academia has only recently broken away from viewing our farpast relatives, the Neanderthals, as dull and animalistic, and current pop culture still treats "Neanderthal" as a synonym with "backwards." Wragg Sykes, who works as an archeological consultant for publications like the Guardian, Scientific American, and the BBC, brings together detailed case studies in geology, archeology, and paleontology to demonstrate the Neanderthals' hunting and tool-making techniques (more advanced than previously thought!), and examines burials and remains to explore the Neanderthals' empathetic sense of community and obligation.



As always, happy reading First UMC Palo Alto! This Thanksgiving season, we're especially thankful for our church family.

INSIGHTS November 2022

Film Group Is Still Watching ...

Last month, Insights listed some of the films suggested by the Social Action Team that have been viewed and discussed by the Monday evening film group. Here are a some more.

Maiden

Mali Blues

Midnight in Paris

Minari

Moonlight

My Family

My Octopus Teacher

Neutral Ground

Nomadland

On the Basis of Sex

One Child Nation

Osama

Passing

Picture a Scientist

Pinky

Plague at the Golden Gate

Rabbit-Proof Fence

Roma

Saipan Island

Save the Last Dance

Selma

Shall We Dance

Sicko

Sir

Sound of Metal

Tangerines

The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

The Black Church

The Border Cafe

The Chosen One

The Danish Girls

continued on page 8

~ UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH ~

by Nancy Olson

• Back in the good ole pre-COVID days when we met monthly in person there were lots of reminders about World Thank Offering and about the so many things we have to be thankful for, and reminders about those 'without,' and the missions for women and families that we support. Well, consider this a reminder. If able, please join me in sending a check for United Women in Faith to our Treasurer Lucy Tompkins. Please write World Thank Offering in the memo line.

A happy reminder about one of the missions we have supported for many years, McCurdy School in Española, New Mexico. In about 2012, McCurdy School was recognized by the surrounding community for all the family support and education it was providing for the mostly Native population. It was invited into the total governing body and became the McCurdy Ministries Community Center.

They celebrated McCurdy's 110-anniversary Oct. 29! Donations are still needed to carry on the individualized work they do with students and families. What they have really promoted in the last few years is their VIM program—Volunteers in Mission. Currently they are happy to have two different teams of volunteers from Oklahoma Methodist churches. Eight VIM teams from around the country are scheduled in 2023. Volunteers are needed for a variety of work tasks—construction, maintenance, lawn care, administrative, and classroom duties. A VIM commitment is usually for one week. It is always such a pleasure to receive their monthly newsletter.

- The UWF Reading Program is not just for women, but it is a program intended to educate an informed group of women. Fiction and non-fiction books are chosen for people of all ages and reading levels and most are available in local libraries. Titles fall into five categories: Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action, and Spiritual Growth. Soon, we hope to again provide some titles from the extensive list to our own wonderful church library.
- When United Women in Faith met at Assembly, it did its best to implement its 13 Steps to Sustainability: accessibility, affordability, carbon footprint, healthy food and beverages, just economic opportunities, local solidarity, multigenerational inclusion, paper use, racial justice, toxin reduction, waste reduction, water use, and wellbeing of participants.

We are encouraged as groups or as individuals to practice sustainable practices to care for our earth. If the task seems insurmountable, we are encouraged to start with one or two of the sustainability practices and work from there. We will find many of the goals intersect. ��



by Nancy Olson

This is the season when we should be concentrating on counting our blessings and actually recognizing how many blessings we have and being truly thankful!

I am truly thankful for all the blessings in my life, but here I am in full rant mode.

Companies are set to start labeling many kinds of plastic products as "widely recyclable"—but only 2.7% of them actually are recycled. This designation allows plastic manufacturers to continue to produce single-use plastics that we just don't need, under the guise that they're recyclable.

In May, a report from the U.S. Department of Energy found that only 5% of plastics are recycled—a result that stems from both the mislabeling of nonrecyclable products and general confusion surrounding what can and cannot be recycled.

In fact, one study found that recycling is defined in 18 different ways across the country and the thousands of different community recycling programs continue to confuse consumers by changing what they do and do not accept as recycling.

But this new "widely recyclable" definition is giving plastic manufacturers the freedom to label their products as recyclable when really, only a small fraction of the products can be recycled.

Does burning plastic count as recycling? Of course not, but the plastic industry has coined the term "advanced recycling" as a way to bypass Clean Air Act laws that regulate incinerators.

The plastics industry is looking to rebrand certain types of incineration as "advanced recycling," even though there is nothing advanced about it and nothing gets recycled. What really happens is that plastic products go into the incinerators and out come harmful chemicals—including dioxins and other damaging air pollutants. The leftover waste from this incineration process simply gets burned once more and then discarded at hazardous waste facilities.

Labeling this process as "advanced recycling" gives an environmentally friendly name to a process that only worsens public health and does nothing to stop the rapid increase of plastic pollution in the future.

Additionally, calling this form of incineration "advanced recycling" allows plastic producers to avoid air quality standards in the Clean Air Act and skip investing in pollution controls.

What to do? What to do?

Well, avoid plastic products as much as possible—particularly single-use items.

Look thoroughly at any item you are asked to vote on to see if plastic in any form is even remotely involved—semantics are very important.

Support environmental groups that are working desperately to control plastics proliferation.

Contact the Environmental Protection Agency—we need to concentrate on the health of our citizens and our fragile environment. We need national laws and regulations that bring some sense to the confusion in recycling practices. This starts with bringing conformity to the actual plastic products being produced—products that the manufacturer knows cannot be, will not be recycled.

"Our dreams are big, our hopes high, our goals longterm and the path is difficult. But the only failure is not to try."

—Jimmy Carter

continued on page 8

Film Group from page 6

The Grapes of Wrath

The Glorias

The Green Book

The Help

The Hidden Life

The Hours

The Imitation Game

The Immortal Life-

Henrietta Lacks

The Janes

The Lady in the Van

The Lemon Tree

The Pursuit of Happiness

The Queen's Gambit

The Shack

The Tree of Life

The Two Popes

The Upside

The Zookeeper's Wife

Throw Down Your Heart

Uncorked

Waiting for Superman

Whale Rider

When They See Us

Where to Invade Next

Windtalkers

13th

9 to 5 🌣

Green Notes from page 7

Rant ended-for now.

Thanksgiving should not be one day of being grateful—every day is Earth Day. We are blessed to live in this lovely community, with good weather, our church family, our many opportunities (and challenges). There are too many communities without our blessings. May God open our eyes and hearts as we go forward.

Happy Thanksgiving. �



Holiday Giving Opportunities

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Family Sharing (formerly Adopt-a-Family)

Every holiday season, EHP provides low-income families in East Palo Alto, Palo Alto, Menlo Park and surrounding communities with food and gifts. Family Sharing donors are provided with a wish list of specific food and new gift items submitted by the families registered for the Family Sharing program.

Donors receive basic information about the family, including names and ages of the children, and special needs or requests that the family might have.

Families vary in size: small (1-2 members),

medium (3-4), large (5-7), extra large (8 or more). After choosing the size of the family that you wish to sponsor, please contact LaKesha for complete details at 650-323-7781 or email her at Lakesha@ehpcares.org. You will be provided with the name of the family, their wish list, and the opportunity to make this a brighter holiday season for a family in need through your generosity.

https://www.ehpcares.org/holiday-giving.html



Kynd Kits

Purchase a kit with everything needed to assemble a care package. LifeMoves has partnered with Project Helping to develop eight different kits specific to the needs of LifeMoves clients. The kit is delivered to you, you assemble the care package, and return it to LifeMoves. Each kit creates one care package.

Kynd Kits range in price from \$25 to \$78 and take from 30–90 minutes to assemble, depending on the kit. Perhaps consider purchasing kits for a group activity, such as for guests at a holiday gathering (one kit per participant). By purchasing and assembling a LifeMoves kit, your gift will help families and individuals focus their time, energy, and resources toward returning to stability.

https://projecthelping.org/lifemoves/



Farewell and Godspeed

Rev. Dr. Debra Murray and Joe, her husband, were greeted warmly at a brunch given in their honor Saturday, Oct. 22. The occasion was an opportunity for the congregation to say farewell and encourage Pastor Debra and Joe Murray as they transition to new opportunities. Pastor Debra has been at First UMC Palo Alto for the past four years.

Photos by Ben Conway



INSIGHTS November 2022 9



Consecration Sunday, Oct. 30, marked the formal end of the 2023 Finance Campaign

but it is never too late to return Estimate of Giving (EoG) cards or to make special contributions to support God's work at First UMC Palo Alto.

If you have already returned your EoG card, thank you. If you have not yet, we encourage you to make your commitment for the coming year.

Thanks to your generosity, we can continue to serve the needs of our congregation, address local and international challenges, and find new ways to show and share Christian love. *



11/12 Jacob Morris

11/15 Ron Fredlund

11/1	Isileli Fakalata, Jr.	11/21	Gladys Kalas
11/2	Amiyah Huston	11/21	Lena Duncan
11/3	Paula McKinney	11/22	Joseph Rahn
11/4	Blair Helu	11/22	Alex Riley
	Alicia Breen	11/22	Raymond Bailon
	Rick Branner	11/23	Brynn Iglehart
		11/24	David Blackburn, Jr.
	Michele Conway		Jerry Johnson
11/10	Linda Grossman		E. S.
11/10	Justin Fung	11/25	Caryn Cranston
		11/27	Alice Loughry
	Annie King	11/20	Margaret Blackburn
11/12	John Pencavel	11/30	Margaret Blackburn

11/20 Mina Kiringoda

	WIAIAIA FICOL	TITLE WAS IN
11/16 Michael Riley	11/1/2001	Janet Nicholls,
11/16 John John Kispert		Bill Nicholls
11/17 Marion Hollar	11/5/1999	Jill Kispert,
11/18 Patty Bellardo		John Kispert
11/18 Steve Hickman	11/11/1989	Lucy Tompkin,

Scott Thomas 11/19 Bill Michel, Jr. 11/30/1963 George Carpenter, 11/20 Sydney Keller 11/20 Kevin Keller

Carol Carpenter

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

September 2022 Draft Income and Expense Summary	September 2022 Actual	Actual YTD 2022	Budget YTD 2022	Budget Annual 2022
Income				
Total Member Giving	8,570	269,264	184,759	311,588
Total Income All Other Sources	10,755	114,935	149,075	231,800
	19,325	384,199	333,834	543,388
Expense			*	
Conference Tithe	3,837	35,800	34,913	48,000
Council on Ministries	231	8,887	41,200	56,670
Staff Parish Relations	30,432	263,612	301,033	401,378
Office and Finance	1,481	11,809	18,312	24,250
Board of Trustees	14,309	117,421	159,289	203,500
Total Expenses	50,290	437,529	554,747	733,798
			70.	
Excess (Deficit) of Income over Expense	-30,965	-53,330	-220,913	-190,410



- 1 SPRC, 7 p.m. (Zoom)
- Daylight Savings Time ends (fall back),
 Standard Time begins
- 8 Trustees, 7:30 p.m. (Zoom) Election Day
- 11 Last day to make Joy of Giving suggestions
- 13 All Saints Day celebrated in worship UWF Holiday Card Sale, after worship
- 15 Finance, 7:30 p.m. (Zoom)
- 18 Zoom Art Class, 5 p.m.
- 20 UWF Holiday Card Sale, after worship Insights deadline for December-January issue
- 22 Church Council, 7:30 p.m. (Zoom)
- 24 Thanksgiving Day (church office closed)
- 25 Church office closed
- 26 Deck the Halls, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.
- 27 First Sunday in AdventUnited Methodist Student Day (special offering)UWF Holiday Card Sale, after worship



Our electronic giving page is always open! Give with a few clicks at <u>firstpaloalto.com/giving</u> or text Give to 1-650-376-6784 for a link with instructions.

Your generosity makes our mission possible. Thank you!

Donate

BANK

DISCOVER

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 <u>firstpaloalto.com</u> 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 HouseNoon Current Affairs Fellowship Group

Wednesdays

6:45 p.m. Upstream Bible Study and

Contemporary Worship Service

Thursdays

12:30 p.m. Meditation and Music7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Information for the December-January issue of the Insights newsletter is due

Nov. 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!

INSIGHTS November 2022



First Palo Alto United Methodist Church 625 Hamilton Avenue Palo Alto, CA 94301-2016 www.FirstPaloAlto.com Follow us on Twitter:@firstpaloalto.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST PALO ALTO UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Inside this issue of **INSIGHTS NOVEMBER 2022**

- · All Saints Day, page 1
- Interim Thoughts, pages 1,2,5
- Events this month:
 Zoom Art, Deck the Halls, page 3
- Holiday Giving, page 8
- Farewell Photos, page 9

Next INSIGHTS deadline: Nov. 20

