

First Congregational Church of Santa Ana
United Church of Christ
2555 N. Santiago Avenue
Santa Ana, CA 92706

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

AUGUST 2021

THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

First Congregational Church of Santa Ana
A United Church of Christ

*A diverse Christian fellowship open to all and dedicated
to singing God's praises, learning God's word,
and loving one another on our journey of faith.*

Dear Church Family –

If you haven't heard, at the Special All Church Meeting on Sunday, Leo Lynch's Letter of Call was rescinded by a majority vote. He was given two months of pay in compliance with his Letter of Call. His last day was Sunday, July 25.

This action has left hurt, confusion and angry feelings on all sides.

We have an obligation to our church to work towards healing, learning, and re- building our faith community. We also have an obligation to the many people who count on our facility to continue their good works – 2 other congregations, 2 preschools, the farm, and a myriad of other groups.

We are in contact (and have been for some time) with our Southern California Nevada Conference. They have been praying for us and working with us through this issue for many months. We are encouraged by their counsel, thoughts, and sharing.

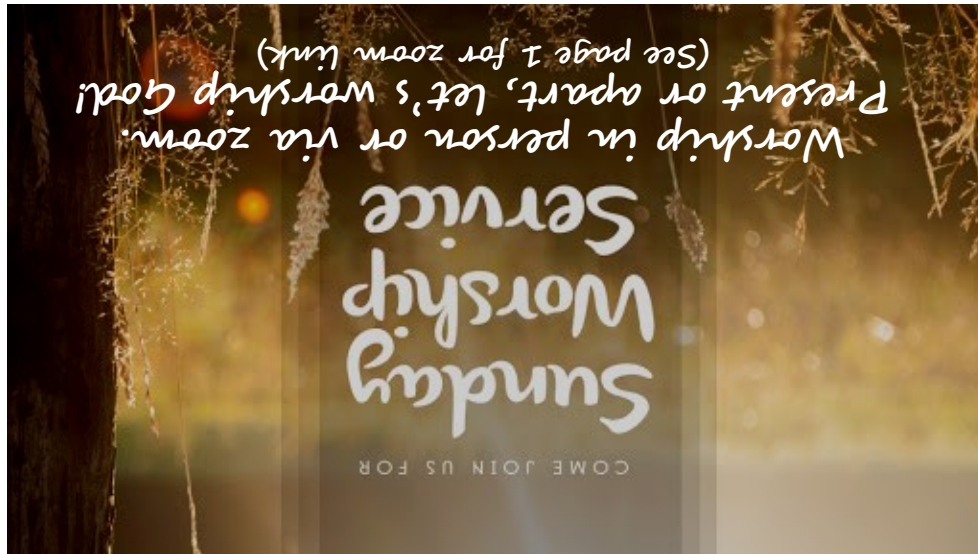
Our Board of Trustees is meeting and dealing with all manner of details that need to be handled at this critical time in the life of our church. We are grateful for their faith and their leadership.

We have sought counsel from Rev. Lenny Anderson, Rev. Paul Tellstrom, Rev. Libby Tigner, Rev. Kris Bergstrom and others. We are asking for your prayers and support as well.

We are continuing to worship in our sanctuary at 10:30 am on Sunday mornings. We are continuing our "5x5" outreach for our conference. We are continuing the faith community that was started by a handful of folk in 1889. We are continuing. We hope you will join us with your prayers and support in person, virtually, or in your thoughts.

Blessings

Sue Stewart, Moderator



Living Psalm 51: 1-17 Let the Healing Begin

Living Psalm 51: 1-17— was written by the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson and was taken from the UCC.org Worship Ways page.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your love and your mercy, help us to remember our transgressions so that we can confront the wrongs we have done and bring about the change we want to see in the world.

We forgot to love each other as you commanded, instead we point out our differences, labeling them flaws and choose to hate your creation.

We want the easiness of being washed and made clean, yet there is no magic to remedy the sins we have committed, or to wipe away the injury we have caused each other.

Our sins are before us. Help us to find our way to repentance that is holy, right and just, repentance that is framed by naming the wrongs we have done, acknowledging the harm we caused, providing apology, and finding our way to restoration as an act of repentance.

The sins we have committed are many. We have sinned against you and against each other. The evils of racism, sexism, classism, ageism, White supremacy, casteism, homophobia, ableism and all forms of discrimination are but a few names we put in place to identify the ways in which we fail ourselves and each other.

We are guilty of not loving as you have called us to love. We are guilty of dismissing those with disabilities of many kinds. We ignore cognitive disabilities

because we cannot see them. We ignore our elderly refusing to touch them. We refuse to hear the cries of those who are suffering. We negate the experiences of those we deem to be unlike us.

We want to wash our hands to feel clean. We would prefer to turn our heads rather than confront the transgressions we commit with every breath. We want to be forgiven without repenting.

Holy God, you desire truths we are afraid to utter. Truths that would identify our fears, our weaknesses and our brokenness. Truths that point to our human failings and fragilities.

We will not be clean, until we can truly repent of the wrongs we have done. We destroyed our communities, we destroyed the land, we destroyed the ecosystem and we destroyed our relationship with you in our quest for privilege and power.

We desire joy in our denial. We want to forget, rather than hold responsibilities for the turmoil we have caused. We want to ignore the bones that we have crushed and the suffering we have caused many. We hide our faces, rather than confront and change our behaviors, or relinquish the crushing power and privilege we enjoy.

Put a right spirit in us, one that will provide us with the courage to face our sins and own the degradation we have wrought around us. Poverty, gender based violence, child abuse, human trafficking are signs that your holy spirit is not with us.

Layreader Schedule

AUGUST	Samantha Castillo
SEPTEMBER	Mark Davis
OCTOBER	Susan Semotan
NOVEMBER	<i>volunteer needed</i>
DECEMBER	<i>volunteer needed</i>

Our Worship Schedule

and lectionary readings to strengthen your walk with God

August 1

Communion

NT Ephesians 4:1-16, John 6:24-35
OT 2 Samuel 11:26~12:1a, Psalm 51:1-12
Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15 and Psalm 78:23-29

August 8

NT Ephesians 4:25~5:2, John 6:35, 41-51
OT 2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33, Psalm 130
1 Kings 19:4-8, Psalm 34:1-8

August 15

NT Ephesians 5:15-20, John 6:51-58
OT 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14, Psalm 111
Proverbs 9:1-6, Psalm 34:9-14

August 22

NT Ephesians 6:10-20, John 6:56-69
OT 1 Kings 8, 22-30, 41-43, Psalm 84
Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18, Psalm 34:15-22

August 29

NT James 1:17-27, Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
OT Song of Sol 2:8-13, Psalm 45:1-2.6-9
Deut. 4:1-2, 6-9, Psalm 15

THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

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Worship services are held every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. on Zoom and in person. See the link on page 1

Deadline for copy: The 15th day of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

Remember

by [Anthony Robinson](#) |
published on Jul 27, 2021

You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem on your forehead. – Deuteronomy 11:18 (NRSV)

“I don’t need, every Sunday, to be reminded of my responsibilities,” said the young mother and teacher. “They are staring me in the face. I do need every Sunday to be reminded of the grace of God.”

People of all ages joke about “senior moments.” We forget stuff. Names. Words. We forget where we parked the car. Thank goodness that with our car keys we can get our car to flash its lights and identify itself.

Moses was concerned about our theological senior moments. Forgetting God. Forgetting our story. Forgetting God’s story.

Looked at in a certain way, the Bible is full of memory-devices and cues. Things to help us remember. Moses lists a bunch.

Church is also full of reminders: Take time for prayer. Sign up for this. Volunteer for that. Remember to read your daily devotion. Don’t forget to pay your pledge and remember to vote.

Most of the reminders are about things I should be doing, about my responsibilities. Fair enough.

But the one reminder I most need isn’t about me or my doing. It is about God and God’s doing.

When I got lost, God came looking. When I was in knots, God loosened the bonds. When I had forgotten myself, God remembered me.

Prayer

Your grace, O God, puts us back together again. Your grace remembers us. Thank you.

About the Author

Tony Robinson, a United Church of Christ minister, is a speaker, teacher, and writer. His most recent book is *Useful Wisdom: Letters to Young (and not so young) Ministers*. You can read and sign up for his blog at www.anthonbrobinson.com.

the worship and liturgy of the local church with witness and action in the community.

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FAMILY NEWS

Our beloved bookkeeper and Board of Trustee Member, Linda Eslinger, is temporarily moving to Texas to be with her son and his family. For the time being, she will continue both of her jobs with us from Texas. Her last Sunday – in person – will be this Sunday, August 1, 2021. We wish her safe travel! We wish her well!

Thank you! Blessings!

Sue Stewart

Create in us hearts that are caring and compassionate. Restore to us the love that is of you, love that will sustain us and nurture those in community around us.

Deliver us from the pain of our suffering. We hurt others because of our own pain and feelings of inadequacy. Deliver us from the wounds of the generational traumas that perpetuate suffering and are a result of being descendants of oppressors and the oppressed.

Open our spirits to experience visions of a world that is devoid of bloodshed caused by injustices by many names. We want to be delivered immediately, hold us accountable for the hard work that will transform our lives.

Creator God, you take no delight in the money we have, the charity we provide or the commitments we have made to our religious institutions. These do not please you when we continue to perpetuate injustices and hate each other.

The sacrifice acceptable to you, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Help us to acknowledge our brokenness, push us to a place of remorse and repentance.

Then, and only then, our healing can begin, moving us to transformation and joy. Then and only then we will enjoy right relationship with the Creator and all creation.

Living Psalms Book is created by UCC Witness & Worship Artists’ Group, a Network of UCC connected artists, activists and ministers bridging

August 2021

So teach us to number our days,
That we may present to You a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:12

Celebrations

Anniversaries

6 Jim & Sue Stewart

Birthdays

1 Bridgett Aquino

15 April Castillo

16 Thomas Stewart

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 *9am NH Worship 10:30 am FCCSA Worship (In person & Zoom) *12:30pm Ministerios Worship	2	3	4	5 *6:30-8:30pm Copy-cats *7-10pm Men's AA	6	7
8 *9am NH Worship 10:30 am FCCSA Worship (In person & Zoom) *12:30pm Ministerios Worship	9	10 *6:30-9:30pm BSA	11	12 *6:30-8:30pm Copy-cats *7-10pm Men's AA	13	14 *10am-4pm CRECE 2pm-9pm MJR Wedding
15 *9am NH Worship 10:30 am FCCSA Worship (In person & Zoom) Holy Action Meeting *12:30pm Ministerios Worship	16	17 *6:30-9:30pm BSA	18	19 *6:30-8:30pm Copy-cats *7-10pm Men's AA	20	21
22 *9am NH Worship 10:30 am FCCSA Worship (In person & Zoom) *12:30pm Ministerios Worship	23 7:00 pm Trustees Meeting	24 *6:30-9:30pm BSA	25	26 *6:30-8:30pm Copy-cats *7-10pm Men's AA	27	28
29 *9am NH Worship 10:30 am FCCSA Worship (In person & Zoom) *12:30pm Ministerios Worship	30	31 *6:30-9:30pm BSA	Events marked with an asterisk (*) are not FCCSA events. Please contact the organizers directly for more info.			

Mark your calendar

**September 13th
Grandparents Day**