

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

AUGUST 2020

First Congregational Church of Santa Ana

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.

A Message from Pastor Leo

Greeting FCC Santa Anna Church and friends,

I pray you are well and staying safe.

The pandemic and the challenges that are accompanying it are pushing us toward our limits. I pray you will keep vigilant none the less. Lean on family, friends, and your church to lift your spirits when things get you down. I invite you to join us each Sunday morning in our zoom worship. Our worship service is 'live.' The members would love you to sign-in with your phone or other electronic device and worship with us.

We also provide a monthly drive-by service. We meet in the parking lot and broadcast the worship service through a local radio network You can stay in your vehicles or sit under the shady trees in the grass,

maintaining the appropriate social distancing and worship. Or you may bring your own lounge chair or use ours. Either way, you are welcomed. I pray you will join us soon.

In the gospel, according to Matthew, Jesus perceived the needs of those who came to listen to him preach about the kingdom of God. Some had walked for days in the hot Palestine sun. He knew they were hungry. Jesus had the listeners sit comfortably on the grass.

He challenged his disciple to feed the hungry crowd that came to hear Him. Their response was, "we don't have enough." "What is fives loaves of bread and two fish to feed them all?" Jesus proceeded to blesse what appeared to be limited supply. At the end of the day, five thousand men, besides women and children, were

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feed. Plus, there were twelve basketfuls collected at the end. Do miracles still happen when we listen to the words of Jesus? (Matthew 14:13-12)

It has been one month since I became your new pastor. I am looking forward to our journey ahead. Know that I am available and would love to reach out to you.

Be Blessed!

Rev. Leo Lynch

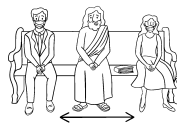
Patient Attention, Valuable Discoveries

For many people, the coronavirus pandemic has been a test of patience — or worse. Medically vulnerable people face an anxious time of hypervigilance. Furloughed workers wait on hold or in lines for assistance. Special events have been canceled or rescheduled.

Those not impacted directly deal with assorted frustrations and inconveniences. Many people are learning the benefit of slowing down, being present (even virtually) to others and practicing patient attention.

Interestingly, scientist Isaac Newton did some of his best work when the plague forced Cambridge University to close. At home, the inquisitive student invented calculus and developed groundbreaking theories of gravity and optics. Later Newton called 1666 his annus mirabilis (“year of wonders”) and reportedly said, “If I have made any valuable discoveries, it [owes] more to patient attention than to any other talent.”

LEAVE ROOM FOR JESUS



What have you discovered during the Covid-19 crisis? What appreciations have you developed for aspects of life you may have previously taken for granted? What has social distancing taught you about the value of neighbors, church, community volunteering?

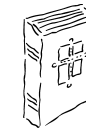
During the pandemic, what have you learned about persistence and God’s presence? What empathy do you now feel for writers of words such as “I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope” (Psalm 130:5, NIV)?

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Quote of the Month

“A friend is one of the nicest things you can have, and one of the best things you can be.”

—Douglas Pagels



A verse a day...

Scripture readings:

- August 2: Gen 32:22-31
Psalm 17:1-7, 15
Rom 9:1-5
Matt 14:13-21
- August 9: **Gen 37:1-4, 12-28**
Ps 105:1-6,16-22
Rom 10:5-15
Matt 14:22-33
- August 16: **Gen 45:1-15**
Ps 133
Rom 11:1-2a, 29-32
Matt 15:10-20,21-28
- August 23: **Ex 1:8-2:10**
Ps 124
Rom 12:1-8
Matt 16:13-20
- August 30: Ex 3:1-15
Ps 105:1-6,23-26
Rom 12:9-21
Matt 16:13-20

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of Santa Ana**

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Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees will meet on Monday, August 24th, via Zoom at 7:00 pm.

Blessing of the Animals Drive-In!



Our Blessing of the Animals event has been moved up to Sunday, **August 30th**, at a special drive-in service. The blessing will be part of our Worship service at 10:30 am in our church yard.

Spread the word to you family, neighbors, and friends! Rev. Leo will bless all of God's creatures. If you can't bring your pet, bring a photo! Treats will be provided for you and your pet.

As we have done every year, we will be collecting supplies for the furry friends of the Santa Ana Animal Shelter. Treats, toys, clean blankets, clean towels, food, and old but clean dishes are welcome!

God Amid Pandemic

Last spring, life changed as we became familiar with terms such as social distancing, flattening the curve and self-quarantining. We could

hardly believe the closed schools, businesses and especially churches — just as Holy Week and Easter drew near! The coronavirus ran rampant in the world. Where was God?

But as the spread continued, many civic leaders stepped up, calmly informing us of the facts, of actions being taken to mitigate the crisis and of how we could help. Healthcare professionals risked their lives and endured separation from families; teachers drew on astounding stores of creativity to teach online; pastors delivered sermons and lessons to empty sanctuaries as members listened and prayed while living in lockdown. Surely God was present — through them!

Then I remembered how God assures us through Isaiah, "Fear not! When you pass through the waters, the fires, yes, even the pandemics of this world, I will be with you" (43:1-2, paraphrased). And Jesus echoes, "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20).
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Fall Joint Worship

Our annual Fall Joint Worship service in September will still be taking place this year! All congregations will be invited to a special Drive-In Worship service. Stay tune for more!



Out of the Darkness Walk 2020– Kick Off!

Join the first ever Southern California Out of the Darkness Experience virtual kick off event! This event will give you the opportunity to learn more about the upcoming Fall events, meet the Chapter staff and leaders, and engage with other supporters in your area. This is a great opportunity to hear from different community members on why supporting the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention is important to them. You will even have the opportunity to share why YOU support the movement to #stopsuicide!



The kick off will take place **August 15th, 2020 from 10:00 am-11:30 am**. This is a kick off event you don't want to miss! A Zoom link will be sent 1 day prior to event. Go to <https://ootdkickoff.attendase.com/> to register.

Mark your calendar! The Orange County Out of the Darkness Walk will still take place on **October 24, 2020**, but this year, it will be on your terms. You get to choose your own course, what time you start, and who walks next to you (within safe distancing guidelines). The walking is real—it's the community that will be virtual this year.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

OCWM-Be the Church

The world needs a church that proclaims, "No matter who you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." The world needs a church bold enough to say, *God is still speaking*.

In Christ we are invited to be transformed and to work with God to make a more peaceful, just, and loving world. Our Still-Speaking God invites us to be bold, to think creatively, and to be innovative in our ministries.

Our covenant with one another in the United Church of Christ means learning to be **United** even when we disagree, to be a Church together even when we worship in different ways, and to see Christ revealed in beloved community. As over 5,000 local congregations across the country, together with the wider movement of UCC agencies and international partners, we strive to be a faith-forming, multi-racial and multicultural, open and affirming, globally minded movement to transform ourselves and our world.







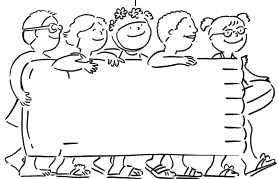

To be that world-changing church, we work together through **Our Church's Wider Mission** to support and inspire each other. Let's help be the change my giving to the OCWM offering on Sunday, August 16th. (UCC)



August

Mark your calendar



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Happy Birthday Bridgett Aquino!! 
2 10:30 am Zoom Worship	3	4	5	6 Happy Anniversary Jim & Suz Stewart!! 	7	8
9 10:30 am Zoom Worship	10	11	12	13	14	15 Happy Birthday April Castillo!! 
16 10:30 am Zoom Worship	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 10:30 am Zoom Worship	24 7:00 pm Trustees Zoom Meeting	25 Happy Birthday Thomas Stewart!! 	26	27	28 	29
30 10:30 am Blessing of the Animals Drive-In Service	31 					

September

- 2 NO FCC Breakfast Club
- 6 Fall Joint Worship Serv. (Tentative)
- 20 Holy Action/Council Mtg.
- 28 Trustees Meeting

October

- 4 World Communion Sun./ Neighbors in Need Off.
- 7 FCC Breakfast Club (?)
- 18 Stewardship Begins/ Holy Action/Council Mtg.
- 25 Food Drive Begins
- 26 Trustees Meeting

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? Do you have a life event that you would like to share with your church family? If so, please contact the church office at (714) 639-0311, or office@firstchurchsa.org