

*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**

SEPTEMBER 2020

*First Congregational Church of Santa Ana*

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*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.*

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*A Message from Pastor Leo*

Greetings FCC Members and Friends,

Take a deep breath. Release a bit of the tension that has been building in your body. These are stressful times. I wonder what Moses and the Hebrew children felt as they wandered in a foreign land for forty years, looking for a place to call home. They also complained about the disruption of their lives. However, they had proof that God was with them. God lead them with a pillar of fire day and night on their journey. God fed them manor from heaven, and they were never hungry. More importantly, God was watching over them daily, keeping them from all harm. To that end, God is with you and me daily. God is supplying all that we need.

We must do things differently, to be sure, ensuring our safety and the safety of those around us. Keep the

faith and don't grow weary. Use this opportunity to look within. Discover how you may arise from this experience as a better version of yourself. Rekindle an old hobby, sign-up to volunteer at a phone bank - making calls from your home for a worthwhile cause. Set a few moments aside daily, thanking God for the opportunities that come your way. Reconnect to God and old relations in a different and meaningful way.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.*

*Where there is hatred, let me bring love.*

*Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.*

*Where there is discord, let me bring union.*

*Where there is error, let me bring truth.*

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*Where there is doubt,  
let me bring faith.  
Where there is despair,  
let me bring hope.  
Where there is  
darkness, let me bring  
your light.*

*Where there is sadness, let me bring  
joy.*

*O Master, let me not seek as much  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love,*

*for it is in giving that one receives,  
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,  
it is in pardoning that one is  
pardoned,  
it is in dying that one is raised to  
eternal life.*

—St. Francis Assisi (1181-1226)

*Let the Light Shine!*

Blessings,

*Rev. Leo Lynch*

## When God Crosses Our Paths

Pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “God will be constantly crossing our paths and canceling our plans by sending us people with claims and petitions.” Last spring, the whole world had

plans canceled, first by Covid-19 and then by God “sending us people with claims and petitions.” Some needed prayers for healing or for coping with grief. Medical staff, teachers, pastors and others serving long hours needed support: meals, check-in calls, “thinking of you” cards. Parents working remotely while helping kids with distance-learning needed encouragement. Crucial nonprofit work still required donations.



Pre-pandemic, you may not have realized that staying home or wearing a face mask could be a ministry. Or that

sending a card expresses love in Jesus’ name. Or that buying takeout from a local restaurant can be a gift to the owners. When our calendars empty, God “crosses our paths” in new ways — both to be with us and to nudge us toward others (even if virtually, or 6 feet apart!).

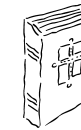
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## Quote of the Month

“Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

# Worship with us from HOME



## A verse a day...

### Scripture readings:

September 6: Ex 12:1-4  
Ps 149  
Rom 13:8-14  
Matt 18:15-20

September 13: Ex 14:19-31  
Ps 114  
Rom 14:1-12  
Matt 18:21-35

September 20: Ex 16:2-15  
Ps 105:1-6,34-45  
Phil 1:21-30  
Matt 20:1-16

September 27: Ex 17:1-7  
Ps 78:1-4, 12-16  
Phil 2:1-13  
Matt 21:23-32

### THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

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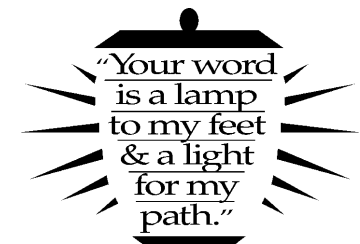
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Psalm 119:105

## Neighbors in Need

*All children have the right to simply be children...*

This is the theme of this year's NIN special offering. **Neighbors in Need (NIN)** is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities.

This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. This offering is coming to FCC on **October 4th**.

*'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'*

– Matthew 25:40 (The Message)

## Out of the Darkness Walk 2020

Have you marked 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.

AFSP (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention) Mission:

*To Save Lives and Bring Hope to Those Affected by Suicide has not changed. We are a strong and resilient community, united in our effort to fight suicide, raise awareness, educate our communities, support those who have lost loved ones, and support those with lived experience. We use our voices and share our stories to provide hope.*



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. So, let's get a team ready and register!

Go to <https://afsp.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=6979>

**#TogetherToFightSuicide.**

## Drive-In the Fall!

The first day of Autumn is September 22nd. To welcome the Fall season, we will be having a Drive-In Fall Worship service on Sunday, September 27th. Bring your mask, bring your quarantine anxiety, and bring your husband. The service will also be on Zoom for our friends who cannot attend. Apart for a time, but together in Spirit!



## All Workers are Essential

The concept of vocation, Latin for “to call,” previously referred only to a calling to church work. But then Martin Luther emphasized the importance — and even sanctity — of all types of labors. The reformer pointed out that “God doesn’t need our good works, but our neighbor does.”

RJ Grunewald, in a blog post titled “God Makes Pizza,” describes how this looks today: “God is busy about his work in the midst of your work whether you realize it or not. The laundry, the spreadsheets, the phone calls and the cups of coffee are all deeply spiritual because God is at work in the world. He is serving your

family, your coworkers and your community through the work you do. God is at work providing ‘daily bread’ through the work that you do, no matter what that work is.”

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## Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees will meet on Monday, September 28th, via Zoom at 7:00 pm.

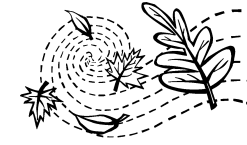
## Time for a Pop Quiz!

Tests don’t end once you finish school. Churchgoers of all ages can regularly conduct these quick assessments:

- The worship test: Do I faithfully attend worship services and Bible studies?
- The weather test: Am I a “fair weather” Christian? Do conditions that wouldn’t keep me from work keep me from church?
- The work test: Am I willing to put my talents to use for my church? Can the congregation count on me to help however possible, or am I too busy elsewhere?
- The wallet test: Do I regularly contribute or tithe? Am I giving my “first fruits” to God so the church can conduct his work?



# SEPTEMBER



Mark your  
calendar



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> NO FCC Breakfast Club	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 10:30 am Zoom Worship	<b>7</b>  LABOR DAY	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>  PATRIOT DAY	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 10:30 am Zoom Worship <b>Grandparent's Day</b> 	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 10:30 am Zoom Worship	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>  First Day of Autumn	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>  Autumn
<b>27</b> 10:30 am <b>Drive-In Fall Worship Service</b> (also on Zoom) 	<b>28</b> 7:00 pm Trustees Zoom Meeting	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>			

## October

- 4** World Communion Sun./ Neighbors in Need Off.
- 7** NO FCC Breakfast Club
- 24** **Out of the Darkness Walk**
- 25** **Food Drive Begins**
- 26** Trustees Meeting

## November

- 1** **Daylight Savings Time Ends/All Saints Day**
- 4** NO FCC Breakfast Club
- 8** **Stewardship Begins**
- 22** **Thanksgiving Sunday/ Food Drive Ends**
- 23** Trustees Meeting
- 28** **Hanging of the Greens**
- 29** **First Sunday of Advent/ Stewardship Sunday**

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](mailto:office@firstchurchsa.org)