Pastor Letter 5-10-15

Easter greetings church family,

This past week, Pastor Mark, Liz Hinz, Rebecca Swartz and Don and Sabrina Moreau and I formed an "Orange" team in Atlanta, Georgia. Yes, we flew across the country and attended the powerful "Think Orange" conference on youth and family ministries. It was a time of deep learning, challenge and even assurance in some ways for all of us as a team in collaborative ministry, and for us as individuals on our own journeys of Christian discipleship.

One of the most reassuring reminders was hearing repeated throughout the week: *"Treat Everyone as a Child of God."* It was reassuring for me because those *exact* words form our missional focus at Everyone's Inn! But hearing the phrase so often caused me to ask: "Who are we not treating in this way at Los Altos UMC?" ... and maybe even more markedly, "Who doesn't know that this is our mission at Everyone's Inn?" For example, who haven't we welcomed to the Inn *yet*? Who needs that warm invitation and explanation that the Inn really, truly is designed for all ages and for folks at all stages?

One of the things that I need to always remember as a pastoral leader is that our work as disciples of Christ really is never done!

We have two weeks remaining at Everyone's Inn this season, and then we take our summer break. The Inn is designed to help foster a church that is inter-generationally focused, a church that encourages different ages getting together consistently to break bread (meal), to worship God (singing, ringing and praying), to play (recreation and relaxation) and to form in our faith (service and small groups). We come together weekly to connect and share our lives, and in so doing, we are the beloved community of Christ.

Some nights that looks like preparing 160+ lunches for our homeless brothers and sisters. Some nights that looks like praying in small groups, and wrestling with the tough stories of the Hebrew Bible. Some nights that looks like a 50-year old rocking a 3-month old while the 30-year old eats dinner. Some nights that looks like the student convincing the child that eating something green isn't all that bad.

All nights it looks like the church of God to me.

Join us for the remaining two Wednesdays, and let's be the church together. All stages. All ages. You are needed. You are loved. Everyone's Inn ... where Everyone is treated like a child of God.

Your sister in Christ,

Pastor Melinda

p.s. Yes, it's still Easter in the church. :)

PARTICIPATING IN THE SERVICE

Liturgist – Greta Macias

Greeters – Jack Palmer

Coffee and Bake Sale – Ad hoc Men- Merlin Thimlar

~~~~~~

The Chancel Flowers are the gift of: Jeanne & Craig Leonard,
"In loving memory of Gene Lang Condon,
whose birthday is May 13, 1924."

The Narthex Flowers are the gift of: Cella McClish,
"For Virginia."

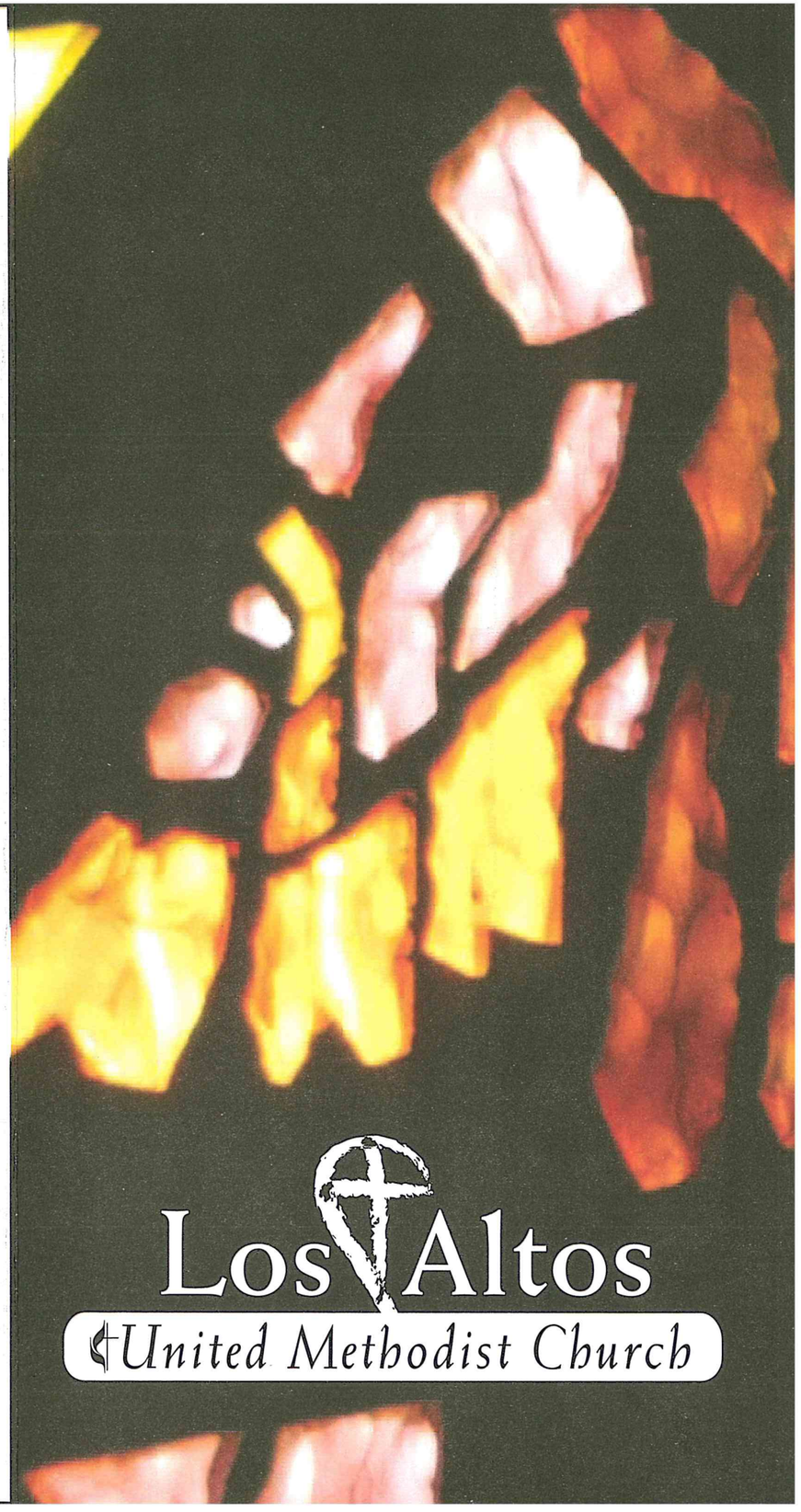
~~~~~~

Los Altos United Methodist Church
5950 E. Willow St. Long Beach, CA 90815
Phone: 562-598-2451 Fax: 562-596-2843
Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-3:30 PM
Friday 9:00 AM-12:00 PM
Web site: www.losaltosumc.org
Email: office@losaltosumc.org

~~~~~~

LAUMC MINISTRY STAFF

Bishop - Minerva Carcaño
District Superintendent - Kathey Wilborn
Lead Pastor - Mark Ulrickson
Pastor of Youth & Family – Melinda Teter Dodge
Pastor Emeritus - Ken McMillan
Church Administrator - Jennifer Garcia-Von Ranzow
Senior Ministries Administrator – Liz Hinz
Interim Director of Music – Mary Breuer
Organist /Principal Pianist - Derek Gordon
Director of Handbells - Debbie Shaw
Worship Band Leader – David Roberts
Preschool Director - Wendy Allen


~~~~~~

Festival of the Christian Home

May 10, 2015 8:30 AM

GATHERING AND PRAISE

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Prelude "In the Garden" Mark Hayes

* Call to Worship

Leader: Today is a celebration we call the Festival of the Christian Home. For many of us it is also a celebration called Mother's Day. We are reminded that God has called us together in relationships of love, nurture, and growth that we may witness to God's love and power in our lives.

People: We celebrate the many ways in which families are designed, from the single person who is in family with God, to the multitude of family systems. In the midst of all these differences, God is the constant loving presence with us.

Leader: Praise be to God who has called us here!

People: Praise be to God who continues to bless us. Amen.

*Opening Hymn "O Lord, May Church and Home Combine" #695 UMH

*Greeting One Another

Our Life Together

Prayer

Prayer Song "Change My Heart, O God" #2152 FWS

A Litany for Mothers Day (by Rick Morley)
Peoples Response: "Hear Our Prayer"

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Witness of the Church Acts 10:44-48 NT p. 130

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?' So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Sermon "One Family" Rev. Mark Ulrickson

* Proclaiming Our Easter Faith *(from United Church of Canada)*

Leader: We are a resurrection people, and we gather to celebrate the God who raises us to new life. Together we boldly proclaim:

People: We are not alone; we live in God's world.

Leader: We believe in God: who has created and is creating,

People: Who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.

Leader: We are called to be the church: to celebrate God's presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil.

People: To proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

Leader: In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

People: We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

*Gloria Patri (Choral Response) #70 UMH

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

Offering of Ourselves and Our Gifts

*Offertory "Blessed Jesus" J.S. Bach

*Prayer of Dedication

SENDING

*Sending Hymn "You Formed Us in Your Image, Lord"
(tune "What Child is This?" – Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

You formed us in your image, Lord: You call us your own children.
In you, each one is loved, adored – unique among the millions.
Bless, Lord, the families who know the joy: Christ claims and frees!
Bless, too, the ones who weep, forgetting that you love them.

You made our homes to honor you. With love the strong foundation.
In serving God and neighbor too, we find our life's vocation.
Bless families large and small, who love and serve you when you call.
Bless, too, the ones who fear – whose trust and love are shattered.

Christ loved and honored family, yet showed us what is greater.
He taught a higher loyalty to God our good Creator.
Bless, Lord, the ones who long to build up homes where faith is strong.
Bless children, women, men who risk to serve your kingdom.

In home and church our faith is formed: we learn your love and caring.
From here we're called to face the storm, your love and justice bearing.
Each day your Spirit sends! We go to strangers, neighbors, friends.
Peace, justice, joy we bring to all your human family.

*Benediction

Postlude "Alleluia" Healey Willan

* Indicates to stand if you are able.

** Welcome! We are glad you have joined us this morning. We invite you to prepare for worship by reviewing the guest card in the pew, silencing electronic devices, and, as needed, asking an usher about our assisted listening devices.