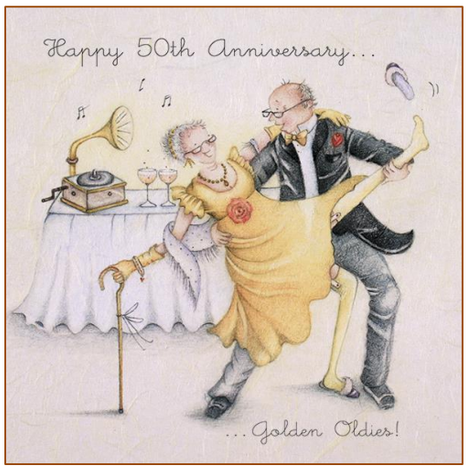
The Cornerstone

Rolling Hills United Methodist Church
26438 Crenshaw Blvd.
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274
310-377-6771

February 2016



GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

It is time again to celebrate with those in our Church family who have been or were married for 50 or more years. We would love to post the stories of how you met as well as display your wedding photos. If you'd like to tell your story, please send a short description of how you met via email to Rachel Stam at rachel@rhumc.org. Also, we have the anniversary list from last year, but if you are new to the congregation, or have now been married for 50 years, please email Rachel Stam with your name and wedding date, or contact the church office at 310-377-6771. In addition to sending us your stories, please consider bringing a wedding photo to the church office during the week of February 8th identified with your name. Photos may be retrieved in the office the following week. Thanks for your help and participation! And congratulations!

from the pastors — *Jonathan Chute*

Well the year has truly begun! An early Easter seems to accelerate almost everything in the Church. Ash Wednesday is February 10, inviting us into the season of grace known as Lent. The Prayer Vigil (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.) and the Ash Wednesday Service (7:30 p.m.) each offer opportunities to renew our spirits as we move through the forty days (not counting Sundays) that lead us to the resurrection. Feel free to explore April's Bible study as another way to draw closer to God through this time.

But that's not all! A little over a week ago we had our annual Charge Conference (or annual meeting). We did all the things we needed to do, well-led by our District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Kathey Wilborn. We approved the budget for the new year, putting in place the resources to live faithfully and generously as God's people.

Pledges to the Operating Budget for this year were up 17% over 2015 – that is amazing and encouraging. Your Giving Cards totaled $852,174, with another $200,000 in expected contributions from those who give without completing a card. As we move through this year together we count on your giving to make possible the mission God has given us. Though that may seem obvious, we never want to take for granted the generosity of our congregation. Thank you, and bless you, for all that you do, and all that you give.

This is important as we look to break ground this year on Phase Two of our New Facility Project. Our mission with children and their families is renowned and respected in the Peninsula/South Bay community. Replacing our aging educational buildings is vital for our future together. In April and May we will be organizing a number of gatherings in the homes of our church family, to update everyone on the progress we are making. We will also be sharing our plans for the project's finances, including an invitation for new gifts going forward. We have already received several significant gifts and pledges toward this goal. We will need broad support across the church family to move forward in hope and strength.

I also want to share good news about the "satellite" of Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool, located at Walteria UMC. Just over a year ago we took over a failing preschool on that site, with a total of 17 children enrolled. We made it through the Spring and began the Fall with about the same number. As of this year, we now have 38 children(!) taking part in a healthy, encouraging and generous program, based on the success we have seen here for so many years. We are approaching the site's capacity of 50, which almost no one could have imagined when we started. Our Preschool Director, Myra Ghabrial, and her staff deserve enormous credit for what they have achieved.

As I said, the year has truly begun! We look forward to where God is leading....

Grace and peace,

Jonathan

April Herron

Dear Fellow Travelers,

I have learned that many of you like to go places, see things, and enjoy new experiences. I share your enthusiasm! One of the many benefits of travel is that it can reveal to us what it is we most value in life.

Last year in February, I experienced the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of being in Brazil for Carnival! It was something like an astounding mash up of Halloween costume contest meets frat party, meets food and craft fair, meets marching band competition, meets church social, meets multiple parades running amok, and then making the whole thing bigger and more chaotic than you can possibly imagine. I would not believe it if I had not seen it with my own eyes and heard it with my own ears.

So overwhelming was the influx of visitors for residents in the town of Olinda that the churches actually were boarded up for the duration of the five day event. It was a strange sensation to see the buildings that I consider to be places of refuge and solace become closed off and inaccessible. When Ash Wednesday arrived (the official beginning of the season of Lent) I could not find a church that was holding services. I discovered that I really missed the chance to honor the day by being with others in a prayerful setting. Imagine my happiness and gratitude this year to look forward to participating in the Rolling Hills UMC Ash Wednesday traditions for the first time!

The day long prayer vigil and evening worship service on February 10 will be a wonderful beginning to the six week season of Lent which culminates in Easter Sunday. During Lent, we are mindful that Jesus is traveling to Jerusalem, healing and teaching along the way, and trying to prepare himself and his disciples for what is to come. This awareness makes Lent an excellent time for scripture study focused on Christ's life, death, and resurrection. I am glad to be offering such a study! It will meet three times, with a daytime option and an evening option available each time. The schedule is below. If you anticipate taking part, please send me an email (april@rhumc.org) or complete a sign up form. May God grant us opportunity to grow in faith this Lenten season.

April

Lenten Bible Study
Thursday, February 18: "Jesus' Life"; choose 10:30 to noon OR 7 to 8:30 pm
Thursday, March 3: "The Cross"; choose 10:30 to noon OR 7 to 8:30 pm
Thursday, March 17: "Resurrection Life"; choose 10:30 to noon OR 7 to 9:30 pm

Ash Wednesday -- February 10th

Lent is one of those seasons of the church that seems to be both highly anticipated *and* a little bit anxiety-producing. We look forward to the thoughtful time leading to Easter, while knowing that sacrifices are expected – but what sacrifices and what is good enough to prepare us for the celebration of the resurrection of Christ?

"Ash Wednesday is a kind of baptismal branding. We are marked on our foreheads with the cross of Christ, which is a tree of life to beckon us back to the garden. . . coming back to baptism is hard work, like pruning vines, like plowing the earth, like the discipline of training for a contest. Of course, neither the hard work nor the training do the job. All of us will learn this once again, when Lent is over and we have failed but God has not." (*A Lent Source Book)*

Our Ash Wednesday Prayer Vigil will start at 7:00 a.m. and continue to 7:00 p.m. There will be signups on the patio on **Sunday, February 7th** for specific times during the day - more than one person is welcome at any time. We just want to make sure that someone is in the sanctuary at all times on that day.

The service will start at 7:30 p.m. with readings, music, prayer, and the imposition of ashes. All are invited to bring one of the votive candles (provided) to the altar.

"Remember, human, that you are dust,
And to dust you will return."

Genesis 3:39

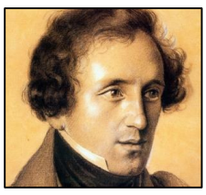
Lenten Bible Study: The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus

Studying scripture together allows for the sharing of insights, questions, and mutual encouragement. For those wanting to learn the core stories of the Bible or deepen their encounter with the scriptures, this three-session class is an opportunity to focus on Jesus's life and ministry, as well as the significance of Good Friday and Easter. Participants can choose to attend the daytime section (10:30 a.m. to noon) or the evening section (7:00 to 8:30 p.m.) on the dates listed below. Resources include journals organized around the theme of "*God's Journey With Us*" and short DVD presentations by a New Testament scholar. April Herron provides leadership.

Thursday, February 18: Jesus' Life
Thursday, March 3: The Cross
Thursday, March 17: Resurrection Life

Chancel Choir to Present Good Friday Program

The Chancel Choir will present its Easter Season Program at 7:30 p.m. on **Good Friday, March 25**. The program will feature *"As Pants the Hart"* by Felix Mendelssohn, *"Requiem"* by Mark Hayes, and other reflective pieces that are particularly appropriate for the close of Holy Week, including a brand new setting of *"Were You There"* by our own Charles Dickerson.



"As Pants the Hart" is a setting of Martin Luther's German translation of Psalm 42 composed by Mendelssohn in 1837-38 for soprano soloist, mixed choir and orchestra. Our own Jessica Tisdale will be featured as soprano soloist for our performance of this work.

"Requiem" by Mark Hayes is a six-movement work of about 35 minutes that elegantly employs both Latin and English in the setting of the traditional Requiem text. Hayes is a contemporary composer whose works are frequently featured in our churches. His "*Requiem"* was premiered at New York City's Lincoln Center in 2013 with Hayes conducting.

"Were You There" is a setting of the traditional spiritual text and new text to a new tune by our own Director of Music Charles Dickerson. Our presentation will be the world premiere.

RHUMC Concert Series

RHUMC Main Concert Series is proud to announce a concert by internationally-heralded French-born violinist Etienne Gara, and his new group Sunset Club Trio, consisting of German virtuoso Ines Thome on electric guitar, and prize-winning Texan Michael Gratovich on flamenco guitar. These world-class musicians have joined together to produce a fresh approach to the classical violin and piano repertoire. They have carefully chosen a program where these instruments can shine--and the interesting combination enables them to revisit sound textures of the classical masterpieces, as well as newly commissioned ones to bring a whole new aspect and energy to the stage! The concert will be **Friday, February 19th**, 7:30 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Earlier in the day, Etienne Gara will also be conducting a Master Class of student violinists at the church from 3:30-5:30 p.m.--and the public is invited! Please call (310) 377-6771 for further information. This concert is free--donations are appreciated and all proceeds go to the artists.

3rd service 10th Anniversary!

On a cool dark night in February 2006, our congregation launched a completely new venture, a Sunday evening worship service known as 3rd service. It came about through the efforts and devotion of many good people, who hoped that we could meet and serve new friends in the community. What came about is a bit less formal than what we do on Sunday morning. It's a service that helps with families whose children are active in weekend sports activities. It welcomes people home who've been up to the mountains or out in the desert for the weekend. It's a home for people who don't get up and running as early as they used to!

Of course the heart of 3rd service is the music, led by an amazing ensemble of piano, percussion, guitars, mandolin and fiddle. Over the years Patti MacLeod has pulled together a talented team which presents perhaps the most eclectic musical range in any church, anywhere. On **Sunday, February 28** we will celebrate the tenth anniversary of 3rd service with old and new friends together, special guests, and (of course) taco night. We hope you can come to share in the fun!

Habitat for Humanity

Chris Untiet, Associate Director of Faith Relations, recently shared updates with our Missions Committee about his organization's ongoing efforts to bring people together to build homes, communities and hope. Some highlights of Chris' presentation:

- RHUMC has supported Habitat for Humanity for more than 16 years with prayers, numerous builders and volunteers on various home sites, and monetary gifts in excess of $100,000.
- Habitat for Humanity is embarking on a five-year campaign, "Building a Greater Los Angeles", with a goal of 100 homes in 2016.
- Programs are in place to increase participation and support. For example "Nickels for Nails" (a spare change collection effort) is popular with youth. "Covenant Faith Partners" is a new program with a focus on bringing congregations together. For more information on the work of Habitat for Humanity, please visit www.habitatla.org.
- Our church group will participate in a "build day". Between 15 and 25 volunteers will be needed – if you are interested in joining, please email Susie Lines at susielines@outlook.com.

Methodist Missionary

"When I felt God calling me to serve, it was definitely the most exciting time in my spiritual life," says John Elmore, a Methodist missionary whose work we support in Chile. John and his wife Maria Cristina Hurtado, are based in Angol, where they are affiliated with the Methodist Agricultural School for Mapuche Indians. John will be joining us at RHUMC for a visit to share details of his work in the evening of **Wednesday, March 9th** – more details will be forthcoming.

Dawn Unity Lecture

The Dawn Unity Group will present its Interfaith Bible Study Lecture, "Abraham-Common Ancestor of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam?" on **Sunday, February 21**, 7:30 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Guest speaker is Reinhard Krauss, Lecturer for the Study of Religion at UCLA where he teaches on the role of the patriarch Abraham in Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. He received his PhD at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and is an ordained Presbyterian minister.

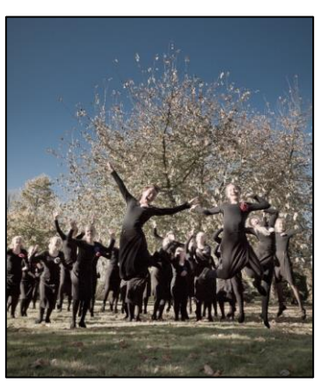
Dawn Unity Group

"The Legacy of David" will be the topic of discussion on **Tuesday, March 1**, 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Ner Tamid, 5721 Crestridge Road, Rancho Palos Verdes. The panelists are our very own Jonathan Chute; Rev. Clayton Cobb, Presbyterian Church, USA; Rabbi Brian Schuldenfrei, Congregation Ner Tamid; Fr. Alexei Smith, Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The free 90-minute program will be followed by refreshments and a chance for further dialog with the panelists. For questions, call 310-833-7008.

Note the Date – One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing enables the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) to live out its mission to alleviate human suffering. UMCOR provides humanitarian relief in more than 80 countries when war, conflict or natural disaster disrupts life to such an extent that communities cannot recover on their own. On **Sunday, March 6**, we will have a special offering to help underwrite UMCOR's "costs of doing business." This helps UMCOR keep the promise that 100% of any gift to a specific UMCOR project will go toward that project, not administrative costs. Special envelopes will be inserted in the Sunday Worship bulletin. Thank you for your generosity.

Copenhagen Girls' Choir Is Coming to RHUMC!

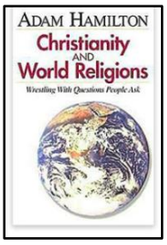


The Copenhagen Girls' Choir travels abroad once a year to share their musical talent. This March these thirty-three young women (ages 14-16) are coming to California. They will be performing at RHUMC on **Wednesday, March 16**, at 7:00 p.m.

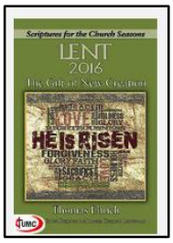
Host Families Needed: We are looking for volunteers to host 2-4 girls during their four days/nights here in Palos Verdes. They will arrive Monday evening, March 14 by charter bus from Northern California and fly home from LAX Friday afternoon, March 18. Host family responsibilities include overnight accommodations in your home, breakfast, and dropping your guests off at the designated meeting place (local) from where they will proceed with that day's activities. To sign up to be a host family, contact Susan Deo: 310-373-9826 or nasdeo@earthlink.net

Sunday Seekers' Bible Study

The Sunday Seekers' Bible Study meets every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Aldersgate room and all are encouraged and welcome to attend.

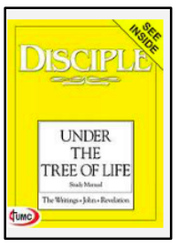


We are currently exploring a book by Adam Hamilton, *"Christianity and World Religions."* This is a study of how other major religions answer the basic questions about the nature of God including why we believe the claims of Christianity over those of other faiths.



On Feb 14 the Seekers will start a 6-week plus Lenten study using a very exciting new book for 2016, "*The Gift of a New Creation*" by Thomas L. Erich. The author uses both Old and New Testament Bible readings for Lent and Easter to help participants understand and engage in meaningful spiritual practices and offer gratitude for the availability of God's salvation. After this Lenten study we will resume our studies of the World Religions and the Family Tree of Christianity.

Evening Disciple Class



Disciple IV will begin its final study phase of the Old and New Testament with the Book of John, the letters of John and the difficult and exciting Revelations. If this part of the Bible excites you or you want to know more about the theology behind the mysteries of Christianity, please join our group of 6-8 as we travel the path of the disciples of Jesus.

We meet in the Aldersgate every Wednesday evening for 1½ hours starting at 6:30 p.m. See Mike Lewis for more details.

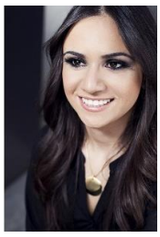
Second Sundays At Two

February 14 at 2:00 p.m.

Stars of Tomorrow - from USC Thornton School of Music

Violinist
Philip Marten

Cellist
Coleman Itzkoff



Pianist
Alin Melik-Adamyan

Share Romantic Classical Music with Your Valentine!

This top ensemble from the USC Thornton graduate program was selected by USC Thornton Director of Chamber Music and renowned violist **Karen Dreyfus**. The talented artists study with the nation's leading teachers — **Philip Marten** with former NY Philharmonic Concertmaster **Glenn Dicterow**, **Coleman Itzkoff** with renowned cellist **Ralph Kirshbaum**, and **Alin Melik-Adamyan** with renowned pianist **Kevin Fitz Gerald**. The Trio is coached by famed Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Maestro **Jeffrey Kahane**.

Free-Will Offering

Meet the Sextons!

No, it's not a new singing group. This dedicated team arrives early on Sunday mornings to prepare our church campus for Sunday activities. Including unlocking doors, turning on lights and even plugging in the coffee pot. Thanks to: Jim Showalter, Curt Wuestenhagen, Dale Gehr, and Oren Sheldon. If you would like to volunteer to be a sexton, please contact the church office at 310-377-6771.

Club Maintenance

On January 16th a hard working group took care of a number of items on our maintenance work list, including painting the hallway in the Office. 12 folks were in attendance, including two scouts.

The next two opportunities to participate in the Club Maintenance effort will be on **February 13 and March 12** at 8:30 a.m. Please mark these dates on your calendar and share in the ongoing work to keep our facilities in good repair. And also note that a lunch is served.

Preschool Fall Registration Dates

Monday, February 22 to Friday, February 26 – Rolling Hills United Methodist Church Members and Preschool Committee Members.

Monday, February 29 through Friday, March 4 – Currently Enrolled and Returning Families. **All registration cards Must Be Returned by Friday, March 4**.

Monday, March 14 through Friday, March 18 – Waiting List Families. The waiting list families will be contacted by phone to come and register based on available spaces left after the above registration. Boy/girl ratio is also taken into consideration.

Wednesday, March 23 – New Families, Open Enrollment. After all the above registration, if we have an available space, the child will be enrolled based on boy/girl ratio in class and age. If not, the child will be put on the waiting list and will be contacted as soon as a space becomes available.

Fall Class Assignments – Currently enrolled families will receive Fall Class Assignments on Wednesday, March 30 and Thursday, March 31.

Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool Fundraiser

Purchase a meal at Joey's Smokin' Bar-B-Que located at 25308 Crenshaw Blvd, Torrance (in the Rolling Hills Plaza, next to CPK) **February 8th-11th** from 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. and our preschool will receive 20% of the sales generated on all full-priced menu items, dine in or take out. No need to bring a flyer. Just inform Joey's that you are there for the fundraiser PRIOR to ordering.

Book Fair Coming Soon!

Easter is coming so hippity hop on over to the book fair..... Please join us for the Spring Scholastic Book Fair at our preschool! We will have a great selection of books available for purchase on March 3rd and 4th during preschool hours (located in the narthex) as well as **Sunday, March 6th** (on the patio-weather permitting). The books will include a wide range of infant board books, lots of preschool titles, some early chapter books (K-3rd grade), older chapter books (4th-6th grade), cookbooks, as well as Christian titles!

If you can't make it to the book fair in person or are looking for a wider selection of books, please visit our Online Book Fair (March 3 through March 11) at the following address: http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/rhumps. Our school will get credit for every purchase you make! Put together those shopping lists....as you know books make excellent gifts for people of all ages. Thank you for your support!

Youth News

Jr. High Winter Retreat was a huge success. Four Jr. High Students and two adults attended a Winter Retreat at Forest Homes Christian Camp. The theme for the weekend was Safe Harbor and the youth took part in worship, prayer, games, zip line, ropes course and fellowship. 450 students and adults attended the retreat and everyone left knowing they were loved by an amazing God.

February Activities

February 3rd from 6:00-8:15 p.m.: Youth Group– Master Chef

February 8th from 7:00-8:00 p.m.: Youth Council Meeting

February 10th from 4:30-6:00 p.m.: Confirmation– How to Read the Bible

February 10th from 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m.: Ash Wednesday for Dummies

February 10th from 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.: Ash Wednesday Service

February 14th: Sr. High Sierra Service Project Fundraiser

February 14th from 11:30-1:00 p.m.: Chill with Miss Nicole at In N' Out

February 17th from 6:00 p.m.-8:15 p.m.: Youth Group– Almost doesn't count; living up to expectations

February 19th-21st: Sr. High Winter Retreat

February 24th from 6:00 p.m.-8:15 p.m.: Drive-In Movie – *Woodlawn*

February 28th from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.: Confirmation– How to Read the Bible

If you are interested in being a **Senior High Sierra Service Project volunteer**, please contact Kimmie at kimmie@rhumc.org.

2016 MISSION TRIPS

Sierra Service Project Dates and Location

Jr. High: July 24-30 at

San Diego, CA

Sr. High: July 31-August 6

San Diego, CA and Spokane, Washington

SIERRA SERVICE PROJECT EST. 1975

Nicaragua

July 3-July 11
Junior and Seniors in High School Only

February News for Kid Zone and Mid Zone

2016 has started off with a bang at Kid Zone and Mid Zone. From being able to share in "Snow Day" with the Preschool to sharing in the fun with the youth and having a day full of bouncing and jousting as we celebrated "Bounce Fest 2016." We are having a blast! We have over 70 children enrolled in our After School program and are focusing heavily on homework help, healthy snacks, and fun and interactive games to keep us moving and active. This month we have a couple of "non-student" days where schools are closed and Kid Zone will be open all day for families who work. We are also closed on February 15 in observance of President's Day.

Our ever popular spring and summer camps are rapidly approaching. Both Torrance and Palos Verdes are out the same week this year and our **spring camp** will be one week from April 4th-8th

We are soo excited for our **summer camp** this year and are busy planning for a great summer. Our summer theme this year is Route 66 and we will learn and explore as we travel along "Middle Road America!" Summer Camp dates are June 6th through July 29th. Look for enrollment sign up forms and Jr. Counselor volunteer forms on the church website very soon.

It is a blessing and a privilege to be the new Director of Kid Zone and Mid Zone. So looking forward to the months of fun and learning ahead!

With much appreciation,
Angie Gunter
Kid Zone and Mid Zone Program Director

ROUTE 66

Rachel Stam
Director of Family Ministries

Dinner for Eight Update - We are off to a fantastic start! Over 40 couples and singles have signed up to participate this year. In February, the lead hosts for each group will be contacting you to set up the first gathering. I hope this experience will help you connect with new and old friends at church. If you have any questions during the course of the year, please feel free to contact Rachel Stam at rachel@rhumc.org.

Tuesday Walkie Talkies - Let's explore the hiking trails at Ernie Howlett Park, located at 5851 Hawthorne Boulevard between Palos Verdes Drive North and Rolling Hills Road. We will meet on **Tuesday, February 16** at 10:00 a.m. at the parking lot in front of the baseball field. In case of inclement weather, the walk may be cancelled. Please contact the church office at 310-377-6771 on the morning of the hike.

Take an evening out and unwind after the hectic holiday season! Drop off your kids for a fun night of crafts, games, pizza dinner and a movie. Space is limited so be sure to sign up early!

When:	Saturday, February 6, 5:00-9:00 p.m.
Who:	Infants to 5th graders
Cost:	$20/child, $5/each additional child per family
Registration:	Email familyministries@rhumc.org with your child's name and age or call 310-377-6771, ext. 105

Annette Matsuda, RN, BSN
Parish Nurse

Health and Wellness Opportunities

Health & Wellness

Save the Date
RHUMC Blood Drive
Friday, March 11 and Monday, March 14
Located at the Blood Donor Center
at Torrance Memorial Medical Center
Donor sign-ups will begin Sunday, February 21
after all 3 services on the patio.

Oh bless the Lord my soul!
His praise to thee proclaim!
And all that is within me join,
To bless His holy name!

Oh bless the Lord my soul!
His mercies bear in mind!
Forget not all His benefits,
The Lord, to thee, is kind.

He will not always chide
He will with patience wait
His wrath is ever slow to rise
And ready to abate.

He pardons all thy sins
Prolongs thy feeble breath
He heals thine infirmities
And ransoms thee from death.

He clothes thee with his love
Upholds thee with his truth
And like an eagle he renews
The vigor of thy youth.

Then bless His holy name
Whose grace hath made thee whole
Whose love and kindness crowns
Thy days Bless the lord my soul!

Lyric excerpts from the musical, *Godspell*, by Stephen Schwartz,
based on Psalm 103

Senior Pastor	Jonathan Chute	Music Director	Chuck Dickerson
Assoc. Pastor	April Herron	Organist/Pianist	Althea Waites
		3rd Service Ensemble	Patti MacLeod
Preschool Director	Myra Ghabrial	Adm. Assist. to Pastor	Michele Nelson
Family Ministries Dir.	Rachel Stam	Church Office Admin.	Peggy Roulette
KidZone Director	Angie Gunter	Admin. Assistant	Ana Ysabel Lopez
Director of Children & Youth Ministries	Kimmie Stradling	Treasurer	Robin La Tourette
Junior High Youth	Nicole Benson	Bookkeeper	Nicole Lowery Zakman
Parish Nurse	Annette Matsuda	Facilities Manager	Rick Mitchell
		Custodian	Miguel Portillo
Church Office Phone	310-377-6771		
Fax Line	310-544-4123	Resident Bishop	Minerva Carcaño
Web Site	www.rhumc.org	District Superintendent	Kathey Wilborn

SUNDAY WORSHIP HOURS
8:30 & 10 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Next Cornerstone deadline is March 25th
www.rhumc.org