The Cornerstone

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

March 2021

Walking Through Lent

"They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem,
and Jesus was walking ahead of them."
- Mark 10:32

Jesus walked a lot. On foot and in a boat were his two means of getting around. He was always traveling so that he might share good news with more people. After two or three years of teaching and healing, Jesus got very focused on a particular destination. He was heading for Jerusalem. He planned to be there for the observance of Passover, and he was facing something ominous. "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death." (Mark 10:33). What he said after that was impossible for the disciples to hear or understand.

This Lenten season, walking while praying (or praying while walking) is one way we can connect with Jesus and the first disciples. We may not be able to gather in person, but many of us are able to walk around our neighborhoods. As we walk, we can say (internally or aloud), "Holy God, bless this neighborhood and all who dwell here with your compassion and grace. Cause life and hope to flourish, even in the midst of difficult or confusing times. Open our hearts and minds to understand the path you are walking. Amen." As we walk and/or pray, we express our desire to be of service to God in the world.

Everyone in the RHUMC family of faith is encouraged to make March a month for walking and praying. This will become a visibly shared endeavor if everyone will take a selfie or a photo of your walking companions and email it to churchoffice@rhumc.org. All pictures received by March 22 will be compiled into a slide show to be shared in worship on Palm Sunday, the last weekend in March. Thank you for holding the world in prayer.

from the pastors *Jonathan Chute*

This month marks the one year anniversary of a time that we could never have believed would happen, had we not lived through it. One year ago, some might say, we were "on a roll." We had successfully completed the construction of facilities long dreamed of, worked for, and much needed. Children and families were finding a sense of home here. We, too, were finding a sense of home in a place both familiar and new.

We welcomed a group of new members, and that same Sunday two more new friends asked when they could join. That seemed like kind of a good sign! Your generosity in February 2020 was the highest we had ever seen in the beginning of the year.

Then we went from experiencing a kind of far off, low-grade worry, to a serious concern, to a genuinely terrifying reality. What had once seemed distant was now just off shore, in the form of a cruise ship full of people not so different from ourselves.

It has been a year unlike any other. It has not been the worst time in our nation's history, let alone in the history of the Church. We have lived through much worse than this and kept our faith alive. But it has surely been the strangest year of my own ministry.

One of the hardest parts of the year has been the uncertainty of it all. We started out thinking that we should avoid shaking hands after the service, and have to learn new forms of greeting. As the risk of airborne transmission became clear, we were shocked to realize that we could no longer sing in church. We decided that we would have to shut down in-person worship for a few weeks. Not long after we realized it might be months, rather than weeks.

I remember last summer, hoping that we could return to in-person worship after Labor Day. When that came and went my hopes moved on to late October, and later still, Christmas. At each turn, the advice available to us, both from the state and from our bishop, was that we should not do so. Almost as soon as I began to have an inkling about a new re-gathering date, it fell apart before my very eyes.

At this writing, I am afraid that it will still be some time before we can return to our beloved sanctuary safely. Public health authorities predict another wave of infection shortly after Easter. Though the vaccine is being distributed more and more widely, and we can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel, we are not there yet. I am not eager to put a date on it, given my experience so far. But when we do, it won't be because a court or a state or county health department said we could. That is not who sets our agenda, our timetable, as people of faith. We have a higher duty to care for one another in these days.

Things are getting better. That is good news. We know more and more people who have been vaccinated. The number of people critically ill in hospital has been coming down for some weeks. There is reason for hope. With God's help, we are finding our way through the wilderness of the pandemic. That is how we have always found our way through the wilderness.

Grace and peace,

Jonathan

April Herron

Dear Friends,

The baptism of beloved Zara (pictured on this page and included in our February 21 worship service) grants a glimpse of the future we await. The pews in the sanctuary will not always be empty. One day the energy of children will enliven our spirits and rejoice our hearts as we gather weekly for worship. One day we will actually be able to make eye contact with one another as we experience a sacramental moment. One day we will be able to encourage one another in real time instead of only through tape delay, email exchange, and Cornerstone delivery. I am eager for that day to come, and my impression is that you are, too!

As we pass the one year mark of the pandemic, the wait for a new day seems to be getting more difficult. Our eagerness to be in the midst of an in-person community, with all its diversity and messiness, grows ever stronger. We may be gaining new appreciation for the query of Biblical prophets and poets, "How long, O Lord?" And we may even have a new sensitivity to God's recurring question to God's people, "How long will you complain against me?" Patience, evidently, has never been a strong suit for humankind.

One of the wonderful aspects of being the one who gets to pour the baptismal water into the font is that I get to be a closeup witness to the facial expressions and physical antics of the children who are brought forward by their parents. Upon arriving at the front of the church, babies are usually very curious to see what is going to happen next. They will stare and blink and raise their eyebrows. They respond charmingly to the smiles and eyebrow wiggles directed their way. Sometimes they are startled by the water being scooped onto their heads, but as long as they are held fast in steady arms and their parents are close by, they gamely go along, waiting for further interesting developments that might unfold.

Perhaps a baby in the process of being baptized reveals some clues for how we might persevere in these weeks when lives are still being lost and mourned, vaccines are being delivered and administered, caution is still required of us, and our eagerness to be together continues to grow. The God who loves us is ever near, carrying us in unwavering arms. Wide-eyed and trusting, perhaps we can let the water of grace wash over us and prepare us for new purpose and direction in our lives.

Peace be with you,

April

Holy Week in Song

Featuring TLC singers
Directed by Jan Johnson

Daily, Monday through Friday, March 29 - April 2
3:00 p.m.
Meditation Garden

Our TLC singers will be offering an in-person 25-minute choral program, *Holy Week in Song*, under the direction of Jan Johnson during Holy Week, March 29 through April 2 at 3:00 p.m. daily in our Meditation Garden. All singers and attendees must wear face masks and be situated 6 feet apart from one another, except for those from the same household.

Attendees will listen to scripture and choral arrangements of Holy Week hymns that will lead the audience through Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter morning.

If you are interested in attending, please email Annette Matsuda at annettematsuda@gmail.com to reserve your spot! Be sure to wear sturdy shoes like sneakers in the garden and bring a sweater or jacket.

The Missions Committee by Debra Shrader & Chris Campbell, co-chairs

The **Missions Committee** is actively reaching out to the community in many ways, despite the pandemic. Currently, the Missions Committee is inviting participation in the **Harbor Interfaith Food Drive**. The drive comes to an end on March 6th. We are so grateful for the outpouring of food for the needs of the community in San Pedro. We had a goal of 100 bags, and so far have already delivered close to that many!

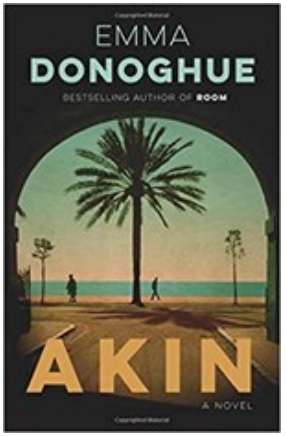
To follow up on the collections we did for the **homeless in San Pedro**, the committee assembled five more "kits" to help people who are moving into new apartments. The gift of the kit includes toiletries, cleaning supplies, kitchenware and bedding which will help the recipient get settled. We are doing a small part to improve lives and give hope. Thank you to all who contributed to the program!

In past years, we've had an enthusiastic group participating in home builds for **Habitat for Humanity**. This past fall, Habitat was one of the groups you might have donated to for the Mission Fiesta. Habitat has invited our participation in a Virtual Event "Power Women, Power Tools" on March 13th, at 11:00 a.m., safely held on Zoom! If you're interested, please register at this website: https://aesbid.co/ELP/PWPT21.

Habitat for Humanity Greater Los Angeles

Power Women Power Tools® 2021

Reminder to Readers: *Akin* by Emma Donoghue



Akin, by Emma Donoghue, will be the subject of discussion on **Monday, March 15**, at 7:00 p.m. The novel encompasses a journey, an exploration of personal choices made when under duress, and a reflection on kinship. Send an email to April@rhumc.org if you would like to participate. She will be sending out the Zoom link and guiding the discussion.

Help us decorate the Sanctuary for Easter! Order Easter Lilies & Spring Flowers!

You are invited to donate one or more Easter plants to decorate the sanctuary for Easter services. The plants can be dedicated a few different ways.

☐ To the Glory of God

☐ In Honor of: _____

_____

☐ In Memory of: _____

_____

Given by: _____

Number of plants: _____Amount paid: _____

Cash: _____Check number: _____

Please make checks payable to RHUMC for $15 per plant, or 2 for $25. You may mail or bring this form with payment to the church office. You may also order plants online. The last day to order plants is March 28th. Thank you!

Second Sundays at Two

Sunday, March 14, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

~ presents ~

Two Consummate Artists and Good Friends
Playing Beethoven's Great Masterpiece:
The Kreutzer Sonata

Violinist
ELIZABETH HEDMAN

Pianist
ROBERT THIES

Violinist **Elizabeth Hedman** has been a concerto soloist with numerous orchestras. She holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and plays regularly with the Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Pianist **Robert Thies's** recitals are highly regarded by aficionados for his consummate musicianship and his sensitive artistic interpretations. Robert has an avid Southern California following. He is returning to the Palos Verdes Peninsula where he grew up for his fifteenth appearance on the *Second Sundays at Two* series.

Streamed over the Internet

Check the concert announcement at
www.RHUMC.org
for the link to the recital

UMCOR Sunday - March 14

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) responds to U.S. and international disasters, addresses diseases and poverty, assists refugees and immigrants, provides clean water and works to reduce hunger. UMCOR lives out signs of Christ's extravagant grace in the world by prayerfully working with communities that are overwhelmed by natural or man-made disasters. UMCOR builds on the strengths of what is already available in a community and actively involves the people affected in recovery efforts. One of the wonderful aspects of The United Methodist Church is that we can do so much more together than we ever could do on our own - and through our connection UMCOR has been doing this for 80 years.

On March 14 we will have a special offering to help underwrite UMCOR's "costs of doing business." Funds raised will help UMCOR keep their promise that 100% of any gift to a specific UMCOR project will go toward that project, not administrative costs. If you would like to support UMCOR, either write your check made payable to RHUMC with a notation of UMCOR on the memo line and mail it to the church office or donate online at rhumc.org with "UMCOR" in the comments section. Thank you for your generosity.

Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool Fundraiser

Thursday on the Town - March 11

Salsa Verdes
from 11:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
2325 Palos Verdes Drive West
Located in the Lunada Bay Plaza
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274
424-206-9456

20% of the proceeds will be donated to RHUMPS

Please bring this flyer so credit will be given to RHUMPS.

Youth Ministries

Ignite Youth Mid-Week Ministry

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. (via Zoom)

March 3 - Bible Trivia
March 10 - Hot Topic: Youth Choose!
March 16 - (Tuesday @ 3:30 p.m.) Botanic Garden Walk Youth must RSVP, space is limited
March 24 - "Baggage" by Skit Guys
March 31 - Exploration of Holy Week

Saturday, March 6, 1:00-4:00 p.m. youth are invited to stop by the church to pick up a bag of supplies that will be used during Ignite this month. Supplies can also be delivered if requested by March 5.

Youth Sunday

March 21 is Youth Sunday! We are compiling a slide show to be included in the service. Youth are invited to email Kristin pictures they have taken during youth events this year, as well as pictures that answer the question: "What does it look like to follow Jesus?" Submissions are due no later then Wednesday, March 17.

Save the Date: An Easter Journey

On Saturday, April 3rd, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., RHUMC invites youth and their families on an Easter Journey. A one-way walking path will start at the lower parking lot, offer a visit to the sanctuary and finish with a Walk Through Holy Week in Wesley Hall. There will also be an opportunity to pick up communion!

Youth Sunday School

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom.
Contact Kristin for the link to join.

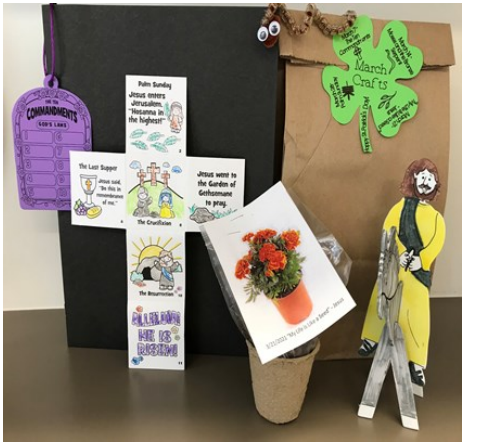
Kristin Reksc, Director of Youth Ministries
Cell phone: 562-234-0161 Email: Kristin@rhumc.org
Facebook page: facebook.com/groups/RHyouth **Instagram**: rhumcyouth_

Children's Ministry

In this continued time of physical distancing, our Children's Ministry staff want to make sure your children have all the resources they need to continuing learning about the Bible from home.

We continue to have our video posted on the church website each Sunday morning for you to see. Along with the video posting, we are emailing our church families (at their request) activity pages to go along with the video.

The option to pick up a monthly folder including activity pages and crafts is also available at the end of each month. If you wish to have this available to you please email debra@rhumc.org.



Welcoming children PK – 2nd grade who prefer a more visual approach to Sunday School!

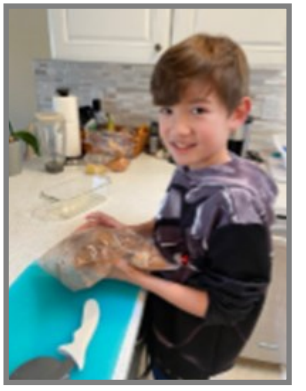
Join our ZOOM classes
every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

For more information and to get the access link, please email Debra DeLuca at debra@rhumc.org.

CALLING ALL 3rd, 4th and 5th GRADERS!

FUN and FELLOWSHIP is our mission for all the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders in Ms. Stevie's class. Every Sunday morning her Google Class receives an email with a short summary of the Bible story, something fun to do and a video link for our virtual class that meets at 5 p.m. All are welcome to join us! Simply register in our Google Classroom by adding your name and email to the link below and YOUR IN!

https://classroom.google.com/c/NTY3ODI1NzQ0NDNa?cjc=ijbkxfh



On Saturday, April 3rd, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., RHUMC invites you on an Easter Journey. A one-way walking path which will start at the lower parking lot, circle the patio, offer a visit to the sanctuary and finish with a Walk Through Holy Week in Wesley Hall.

Children can bring their Easter baskets and collect items along the way such as Easter crafts that they can complete at home, an at home cookie decorating kit, and candy filled Easter Eggs. You will also be able to see the beautiful flowers that adorn the chancel area and have a family photo taken. Then onward to Wesley Hall where you will encounter "A Walk Through Holy Week," before you step back outside to collect your communion supplies for Sunday worship.

The one-way path will help participants to keep safely distanced and will allow for shortcuts for those who wish to skip the visit to the sanctuary and Wesley Hall or confine their interaction to simply picking up communion and/or craft supplies.

We look forward to celebrating Holy Week and the joy of Easter with you in a new way this year. And remember wearing a face mask is an act of love.

The Children's Ministries thanks everyone for their previous donations of paper towel and toilet paper rolls! These are very handy for crafts during Sunday School and during our Vacation Bible Camp in the summer.

With your help we are fully stocked and do not need anymore for quite some time!

Thank you again!

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Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274

Change Service Requested

SAVE OUR PLANET!

Have your Cornerstone sent via email; it's easy, just call the church office at 310-377-6771. You can also view the Cornerstone on the church website at www.rhumc.org

Senior Pastor	Jonathan Chute	Associate Pastor	April Herron
Senior Pastor Emeritus	Martha Rowlett	Music Director	Chuck Dickerson
Preschool Director	Myra Ghabrial	Organist/Pianist	Althea Waites
Parish Nurse	Annette Matsuda	3rd Service Music	Paula Kuno
Children's Ministry Dir.	Debra DeLuca	Exec. Asst. to Pastor	Roksolana Vecerek
Youth Ministry Director	Kristin Reksc	Church Office Admin.	Peggy Roulette
Kid Zone Director	Gabby Palacios	Custodian	Miguel Portillo
Treasurer	John Fitzgerald		
Church Business Mgr.	Nicole Lowery Zakman		

Church Office Phone	310-377-6771	Resident Bishop	Grant J. Hagiya
Fax Line	310-544-4123	District Superintendent	Mark Nakagawa
Web Site	www.rhumc.org		

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 26
www.rhumc.org