The Cornerstone

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

May 2021

Re-Gathering: Our Plan for Live, In-Person Worship

As our congregation looks forward to worshiping together in our sanctuary, our care for one another's health is essential. Our Re-Gathering Team has been working toward the resumption of live, in-person worship this spring. We have consulted both public health authorities and our bishop, the Rev. Dr. Grant Hagiya. Since the initial appearance of COVID-19, our understanding of the disease and its impact has changed greatly. With the wider access to vaccination among our community and the decreasing numbers of persons infected, it seems that we can look forward to being together in person soon. The following represents our best thoughts on going forward as a family of faith.

Our Goal

We look forward to resuming morning worship on Sunday, May 16, at the usual times of 8:30 and 10 a.m. We plan to resume 3rd service worship on Sunday evenings at 5:30 p.m. on June 13. For the time being our attendance at each service will be limited to about 80 persons.

Do We Have to Be Tested or Vaccinated?

No. But we ask that anyone who does not feel well, or who experiences symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, body ache) to remain at home for their own and others' safety.

How Will We Limit the Attendance?

We will be using the reservation system *Pastor's Toolbox*. It allows persons to save a seat for themselves and their families at the service of their choosing. Those who prefer may also call the church office to make a reservation over the phone. After making a reservation you will receive a confirmation email.

What About Visitors or Guests?

We will keep a few spaces available for those who did not register, or who may be joining family or friends at the last minute. We want to be able to welcome new persons as well. But we encourage everyone to make a reservation to be sure there is space when you arrive.

Where Will We Sit?

Entry will be through the front doors as usual. Ushers will be available to be helpful, and bulletins will be on a table for pick up, with recycling bins available at each exit. Seating will be in alternating rows, to maintain a six foot distance from those in front or behind us. There are wooden dividers in each pew, to help worshipers maintain our distance from one another. Exiting will be through the side doors, to minimize overlap between those departing and arriving.

What Will the Services Be Like?

Worshipers will wear masks and remain six feet apart from persons outside of their household. The familiar order of service will be maintained, though with some differences. For now, hymns will be sung by our choir director or other solo voice only. Any singer will be 15 feet or more away from those seated in the sanctuary, with a plexiglass shield in place to help reduce droplet spread. Worshipers may hum along with our vocalist, but congregational and choral singing will not be allowed until it is safe (likely September). We will not be passing the microphone for Joys and Concerns. Those who wish to share a prayer request will be encouraged to do so by email, text, or by filling out a prayer card when you arrive. There will be a basket for offerings inside the main entry doors, as well as by the exits.

What About Children?

Children will sit with their families at least through the time for The Word for Children. At that time those taking part in Sunday School may leave with their teachers, who will be leading them in a safe and healthy teaching environment (often outdoors). Other children may stay with their families through the rest of the service. *At this time we do not see a way to provide nursery or child care, though we would seek to open both the Comfort Room and Martha's Room for families with infants or toddlers.*

What About Air Conditioning?

We have made upgrades to the safety of our sanctuary heating and cooling system. One is a device which ionizes microscopic particles as the air passes through it. This causes dust, dander and virus particles to stick together and drop out of the breathable air. We are also bringing more fresh air into the sanctuary.

Will Restrooms Be Open?

Yes. The main restrooms in the sanctuary can accommodate three persons at a time. Ushers will help us to know whether it is safe to enter. Of course washing hands has always been the best policy after restroom use, and we will expect everyone to follow that practice! Touch free hand sanitizer stations are located inside the sanctuary as well.

What About Coffee Fellowship?

For the time being we will not be offering food or beverages on the patio. We look forward to a time when that will be safe once again.

What About Communion?

We are exploring a couple of possibilities for safe and reverent participation in the Lord's Supper.

What About Baptism?

We are working to celebrate the baptism of infants, children or others in ways that are safe and reverent as well. If families choose to do so, a parent or other family member may hold a young child in their arms, while one of the pastors administers the water and speaks the traditional words of the sacrament.

What About On Line Worship?

Our video team plans to record the 8:30 a.m. service. They will quickly edit the recording, adding the date and other titles and hope to post it for viewing around noon each Sunday. We know that many of our congregation now count on participating in the service this way and want to be sure we continue to offer it.

How Long Will It Be Like This?

We're not sure, but we hope that by September these restrictions will be reduced or eliminated…

Who Is the Re-Gathering Team?

Dale Gehr, Lay Leader
Janet Westergaard, Trustee
Don McCurry, Trustee
Debra DeLuca, Children's Ministries
April Herron, Associate Pastor
Merrietta Fong, Chair, Ad Board
Chris Larson, Worship Chair
Carroll Whitney, Ad Board Member
Roksolana Vecerek, Exec Assistant
Jonathan Chute, Senior Pastor

from the pastors *Jonathan Chute*

It seems impossible to remember what we were thinking a little over a year ago. We had lived through Holy Week and Easter without being together in person. I still can't believe how it felt to be facing that possibility. But we still expected and hoped to be back together "soon" – without really having any idea of what that word meant.

There were signs of hope through the summer, as infection rates stayed relatively low. During the fall our hopes rose and fell a couple of times. And then in January we were hit harder than we could have imagined. For a couple of months now things have been improving steadily. Infection rates in the community are down. Hospitalizations are down. Vaccinations are reaching more and more persons. It feels that we are finally on our way toward the end of the pandemic.

Of course the situation in other countries, and even other parts of our own country, are not as hopeful. We continue to pray and hope for people from India to Michigan, as they seek to be safe and well where they are.

So we are eager and excited to share our plans for gathering once more for live, in-person worship beginning on Sunday, May 16. There is more information in this issue of the Cornerstone about opening our doors again for weekly worship. This is an encouraging and hopeful time for us, as we emerge from the suspension of so many good and normal activities.

But I want to acknowledge that it will not be as easy for some of us as for others. We have practiced safe distancing and staying home. We have cut ourselves off from some of the people and events that help us stay healthy and well. It may take a while for some of us to find our way back together, or for our anxiety levels to get back down to normal. Some of us will want to jump right back in to everything. Others may choose to take our time. We will want to honor and respect the different approaches each other will take. I know that everyone will want to do our best. I am also sure that we will make some mistakes along the way. So I ask in advance for your patience and understanding as we discover what we got wrong!

I don't believe there is any one right way to come back from a pandemic. Each of us, and all of us, will be seeking to find our own way. In a sense we are not in such a different place from some of the earliest Christians. As they tried to chart their new course, sometimes they got stuck. Sometimes they disagreed, even about important things. But over the years that followed, they continued to trust that the grace of God was leading them forward. If we live with the same hope that sustained them, I believe God will lead us to new discoveries, new adventures, new learnings in our day as well. I look forward to being with you as we go.

Grace and peace,

Jonathan

April Herron

Dear Friends,

Sometime in the last few weeks the 3rd service ensemble contributed to our worship a beautiful rendition of the song, “Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer” by Keith Getty. The lyrics are as follows.

Jesus, draw me ever nearer, as I labor through the storm.
You have called me to this passage and I'll follow, though I'm worn.
May this journey bring a blessing; may I rise on wings of faith.
And at the end of my heart’s testing, with your likeness let me wake.

Jesus, guide me through the tempest. Keep my spirit staid and sure.
When the midnight meets the morning, let me love you even more.

Let the treasures of the trial form within me as I go.
And at the end of this long passage, let me leave them at your door.
May this journey bring a blessing; may I rise on wings of faith.
And at the end of my heart’s testing, with your likeness let me wake.

I have kept these words near as the weeks continued on, and they are meaningful and helpful to me again now in the aftermath of my father’s death. Like many of you, I found that losing a loved one in the time of COVID exacerbated some of the sorrows of what is already a difficult experience. Prayerful music has encouraged me, as have all your emails, cards, and kind thoughts. The fact that my dad “finished his course in faith” on Easter Sunday morning conveys an additional sense that he remains held in God’s hands.

Whatever your personal griefs are as we begin to emerge from our months of isolation, I pray for you the confidence that you are beloved to God, the peace that Christ freely gives, and the wisdom of the Spirit to guide you forward.

Together with you in life and ministry,

April

Prayer Gathering in the Meditation Garden

On **Wednesday, May 5**, at 10:30 a.m., up to eight people are welcome to gather in person for a time of sharing and prayer with April. We will follow distancing protocol with our seating arrangement and still be able to join in bringing our joys and sorrows before God. Please make a reservation by emailing April@rhumc.org or by calling the church office (310) 377 6771.

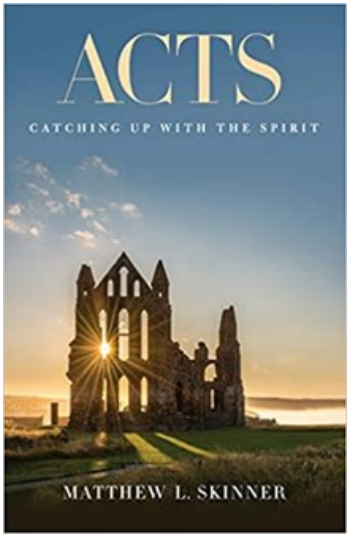
May Book Discussion: *The Book of Longings*
Monday, May 24, 7:00 p.m.

Sue Monk Kidd is well known for her writings pertaining to faith and spirituality, as well as for her novels, especially *The Secret Life of Bees.* In 2020 she published *The Book of Longings,* which takes as its premise the possibility that Jesus was married. While the idea seems far-fetched, the novel makes a surprisingly plausible case of "how it might have been" for him and for his wife if he had been joined in love and partnership with one special person. Kidd has stayed true to Biblical accounts of the life of Jesus and focuses her story on the woman, whom she names Ana, who joins her life to his *before* he begins to travel the land and gather disciples. Readers will gain an interesting perspective on what life may have been like for women in that era of history, as well as for women whose lives intersected with Jesus' life.

One of our regular book discussion participants had this to say about the novel: "We DID NOT THINK we wanted to read *The Book of Longings*. Mom wanted to quit after the first chapter, but we both got into the story and needed to know what was going to happen next. It was more of a page turner than anticipated. I loved how Kidd weaved Jesus into the story, but he wasn't a main character. It has made so many questions bubble up from it for me." For these two readers, reading the book also awakened an interest in the landscape and geography of Egypt, Israel, Jerusalem, and other locations. In other words, you may be pleasantly surprised by what you find in this story!

Our discussion will take place on Monday, May 24, at 7:00 p.m. Please send an email to April@rhumc.org so that she can plan on your participation.

Bible Study for May and June
Acts: Catching up with the Spirit
Mondays, 10:30 a.m., beginning May 17



What were the joys and challenges of being the church in its first century? What might we have in common with the first Christians? How do the stories from The Acts of the Apostles ignite our imagination about the character of the Christian message and its ability to help us live faithfully in a complex and changing world? These are some of the questions addressed by Matthew Skinner in his book, *Acts: Catching up with the Spirit.*

Skinner is Professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary. The chapters of the book equate to six sessions, each of which is also accompanied by a brief video presentation. Participants will want to have a copy of the book, which is available at the church office for $15 and can also be ordered independently from Cokesbury or your favorite bookseller.

One way to describe the focus of the study is as an invitation to notice how God has been present before, in Acts, so that we might together wonder anew where God is leading us today. April Herron will lead the study, which will begin on Monday, May 17, and continue with weekly meetings (except for Memorial Day) in order to conclude on June 28. Classes will be one hour in length, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and are scheduled to take place via Zoom. Please communicate your questions, requests, or intention to participate by emailing April@rhumc.org (or calling the church office at 310 377 6771) and plan, for a season, to incorporate encouraging study of scripture to the start of your week!

Please note: a Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. class could be added, starting May 19, if there is interest in an evening section.

40th CROP Hunger Walk May 16-23, 2021

We've all been impacted by the Covid pandemic, but many have been affected more than others. As food systems are disrupted, the most vulnerable are facing an unprecedented food crisis.

During the week of May 16 to 23 we will be walking to raise critically needed funds to fight hunger for our neighbors around the world and around the corner!

This year we're going to walk in small groups during an entire week following local guidelines on social gatherings. We'll be walking at local parks, in our own neighborhoods, and at the South Coast Botanic Garden. Please remember to wear your mask and maintain social distance. Due to a generous grant from the Botanic Garden, up to fifty of our Walkers will be given free access to the Garden to participate. You will need to register in advance if you wish to walk in the Garden. Details of the offer are: **Monday-Friday: from 4:00 p.m. until closing with a free CROP Pass, limit 10 walkers total per day from all organizations.**

(You and your party must reserve the date through your CROP Recruiter Debra Shrader at teach2play@gmail.com, or directly with Walk Coordinator Bill Graves at wglomas@gmail.com by Friday, May 7th)

If you can join us, please do. We'll be walking in small groups starting on May 16 and going all week to do our part to end hunger. Please show your support for the RHUMC team by registering and donating online at: CROP Hunger Walk - Rolling Hills UMC or go to www.rhumc.org for the link.

This year, the Walk may be virtual, but the needs could not be more real. Together, we can help end hunger in our community and around the world.

Virtual Workshop, *Part II*: Movement Key to Immune Health, Good Spirits, Strength, and Balance

Saturday, May 15, 9:00-9:40 a.m.

Physical Therapist and fitness instructor, Denise Klatte, will be returning to us to host and teach a virtual Zoom exercise class on Saturday, May 15, 9:00-9:40 a.m. Denise plans to further address the importance of intentional safe activity and movement during this pandemic and introduce us to new exercises she'll lead us through together, in the comfort of our homes. *Prior attendance to the first class she led in February is* ***not*** *a prerequisite.* Dress comfortably, wear sneakers, and have water nearby. We'll begin seated in a chair and will progress to moves which can be performed seated or standing.

To participate in the workshop, contact Annette Matsuda at annettematsuda@gmail.com so that you can receive the Zoom link. The deadline to register is Thursday, May 13 and the link will be forwarded to you on Friday, May 14.

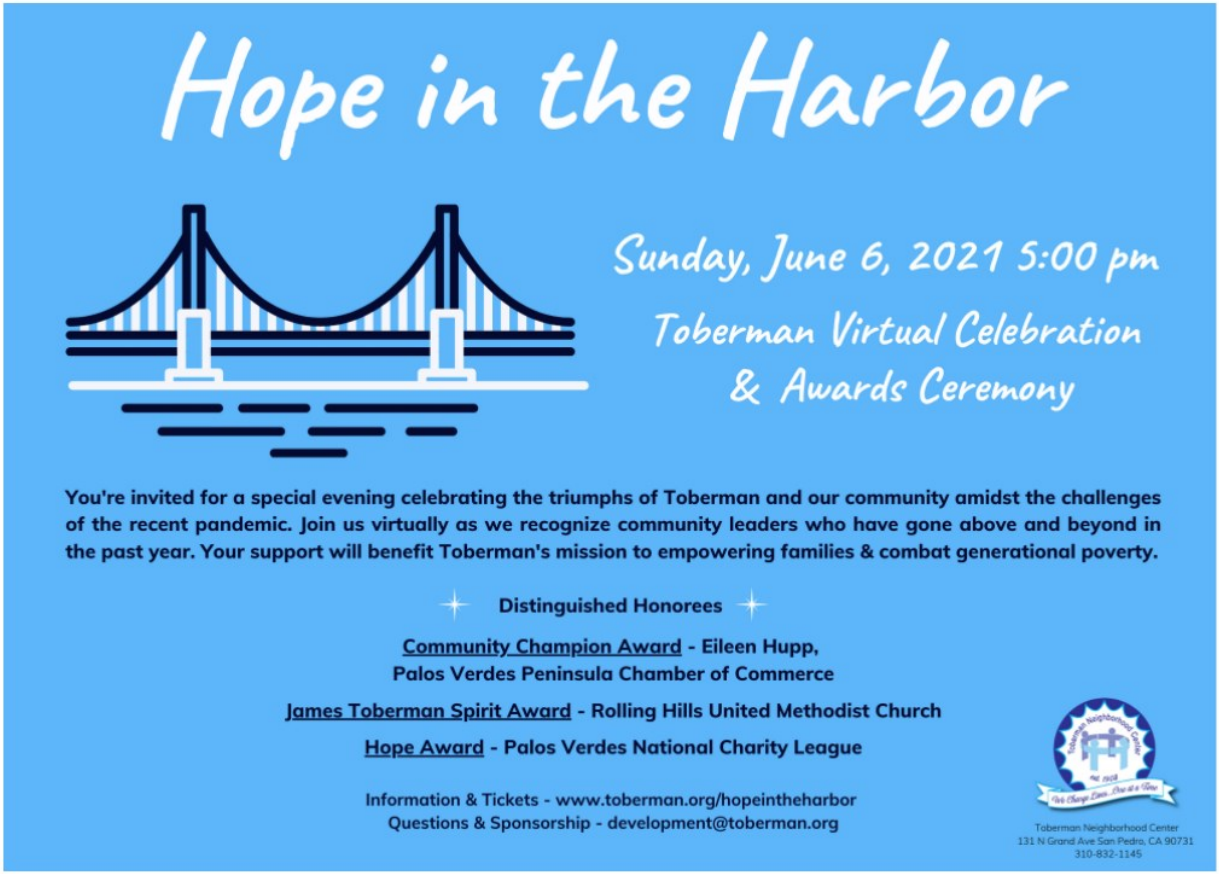
Denise earned her post-professional Doctorate of Physical Therapy from A.T. Still University and received both her MPT Physical Therapy and BS Exercise Science from the University of Southern California.

Denise taught well-received exercise workshops for us in recent years. She is a physical therapist, fitness instructor and consultant whose passion is to inspire others to live vibrantly - despite age, limitation, or situation. She is a board-certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist and a certified Functional Aging Specialist, whose expertise focuses on working with today's aging population in the home setting. Denise teaches Flexibility and Balance classes on-line for "Silver & Fit", available at no cost which you can access by going to the Silver & Fit Facebook Live page or their YouTube Channel.

"...In him we live and move and have our being" Acts 17:28 NRSV

Toberman Neighborhood Center to honor RHUMC at this year's virtual event: "Hope in the Harbor"

Pictured are Executive Director Darlene Kiyan, Development Director Amanda Martelli and Board Member Patty Koester announcing to Jonathan that Toberman Neighbor Center will be honoring RHUMC with the James Toberman Spirit Award at this year's virtual event **Sunday, June 6**. Over the years our church has partnered with TNC serving as volunteers, providing monetary gifts, Christmas toys, and backpack supplies just to name a few. This past year has been especially challenging as Toberman transitioned to serving the community in many different ways during the pandemic and with our help it was possible. Save the date and watch for ticket information. For more information, go to https://toberman.org/



Second Sundays at Two

Sunday, May 9, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

~ presents ~

Members of the Internationally Acclaimed

DSCH - SHOSTAKOVICH ENSEMBLE

Cellist
Kyril Zlotnikov

Pianist
Filipe Pinto-Ribeiro

Violinist
Liza Ferschtman

perform

Franz Schubert's Piano Trio No.2 in E-flat Major, D929

The **DSCH - Shostakovich Ensemble** is a Lisbon-based Portuguese project, which provides a platform for interaction of musicians of excellence on the international scene, masters of their instruments: compelled by the pleasure of making chamber music and a deep artistic collaboration. The Ensemble's founder and Artistic Director, Portuguese pianist **Filipe Pinto-Ribeiro,** is joined by acclaimed Dutch violinist **Liza Ferschtman** and Belarus cellist **Kyril Zlotnikov** of the renowned Jerusalem Quartet.

Streamed over the Internet from Lisbon, Portugal

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

Kid Zone

Summer Camp
Monday, June 14th – Wednesday, August 18th

DATES	THEMES
WK #1 Monday, June 14th to June 18th	Carnival
WK#2 Monday, June 21st to June 25th	Cooking
WK#3 Monday, June 28th to July 2nd	Space/America the Beautiful
WK#4 Monday, July 5th to July 9th	Super Heroes
WK#5 Monday, July 12th to July 16th	Camping
WK#6 Monday, July 19th to July 23rd	Science
WK#7 Monday, July 26th to July 30th	Dr. Seuss
WK#8 Monday, August 2nd to August 6th	VBC-Kid Zone 12:00-6pm
WK#9Monday, August 9th to August 13th	Performing Arts
WK#10 Monday, August 16th to Wed., August 18th (8:00-1:00 p.m.)	Arts & Crafts

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
One day per week: $90.00
Two days per week: $170.00
Three days per week $240.00
Four days per week $300.00
Five days per week: $350.00

Weekly Full Day 7:30-6:00 p.m. *$400.00

*AM Early Care will be available at 7:30 a.m. – $12 a day or $40.00/week

*Extended Care will be available from 4:00-6:00 p.m. – $16 a day or $60.00/week

For more information:
Kidzone.midzone@rhumc.org
310-377-7302
Gabby Palacios
323-610-2253

Registration is open!

TK/Kindergarten - 8th Grade

We will be following recommendations from the CDC and from the Department of Social Services Community Licensing.

Youth Ministries

Ignite Youth Mid-Week Ministry

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

May 5 – "One Thing Remains"
May 12 – Game Night
May 19 – It's all about YOU
May 26 – Graduation Celebration (This is the last Ignite of the school year. Ignite will resume in the fall.)

May 17-21 Service Opportunity: Crop Walk
Youth are invited to help fight hunger locally and globally by raising funds for Church World Services. It's as easy as registering online, collecting sponsors, then selecting a date and time to walk in the South Coast Botanic Garden. For more information contact Kristin.

Save the Date: Graduation Celebration

Wednesday, May 26 at 6:30 p.m. we will be celebrating youth who are being promoted into 6th grade and 9th grade, and those who are graduating high school. Everyone is invited to join this Zoom gathering! If you would like to be included in the slideshow please send Kristin a photo and the name of the school you will be attending.

Sierra Service Project 2021

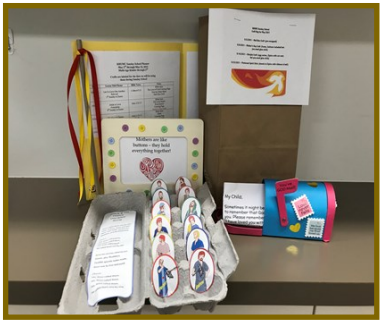
Are you interested in a participating in local service projects while connecting with youth across the country? Contact Kristin for more information about SSP's Zoom summer program!

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



As we slowly ease back into in-person Sunday School later this month, our Children's Ministries wants to make sure your children have all the resources they need to continue learning about the Bible from home if you wish to continue this path for a while longer.

We will continue to have our video posted on the church website each Sunday morning for you to view. 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.

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 5:00 p.m. All are welcome to join us! Email churchoffice@rhumc.org for the link.

Rolling Hills United Methodist Preschool Fundraiser

Wednesday on the Town - May 12

CHIPOTLE MEXICAN GRILL

33% of your bill will be donated to RHUMPS

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

Chipotle Mexican Grill
from 4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
4 C Peninsula Center
Rolling Hills Estates

You may order online for pickup at Chipotle.com or through their app
Code: 2KNHFGP

Vacation Bible Camp

This summer we are GOING FOR IT!

We head into summer looking forward to in-person Vacation Bible Camp!
August 2nd through August 6th – 9:00 a.m. to noon.

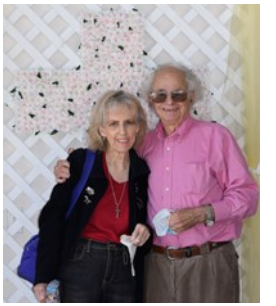
With COVID cases going down and vaccinations going up,
we feel confident we can make it happen!

Registration will be limited to 80 children (down from our usual 200+).
We will be spacing ourselves generously and using outdoor locations
as much as possible before it gets too warm.

Keep an eye out for our online registration which begins April 28th. Sign up by going to the church web page at rhumc.org. and clicking on the Vacation Bible Camp tab.

If you have any questions, please contact Debra DeLuca at debra@rhumc.org
or the church office at (310) 377-6771 and remember SPACE IS LIMITED ☺

Easter Journey - A Walk Through Holy Week



Rolling Hills United Methodist Church
26438 Crenshaw Blvd.
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 May28
www.rhumc.org