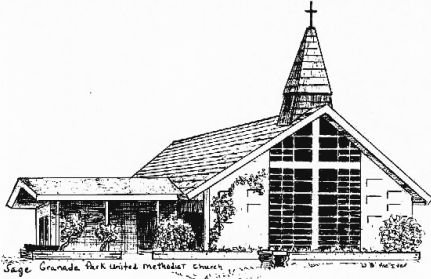


# Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church



## February 2020 E-Thymes

1850 West Hellman Avenue,  
Alhambra, CA 91803

Office: (626) 284-3229;  
FAX: (626) 570-4144

Website: <http://www.sgpumc.org>

Email: [sagegrandapark@gmail.com](mailto:sagegrandapark@gmail.com)

Office hours: Mondays Closed;  
Tuesdays–Friday 8:30am-1:30 pm

### Our Vision:

To be a light on a hill for our community (Matthew 5:14).

### Our Mission:

We are called to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

### Our Values:

We reaffirm our values as a multi-cultural and inclusive community united in the love of Jesus Christ.

### Our Congregational Goals for 2020:

- To start a Saturday night fellowship with young adults.
- To develop a welcoming program.
- To encourage every member tithes their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service.



Rev. Dr. George Martzen, Pastor  
[gmartzen@gmail.com](mailto:gmartzen@gmail.com)

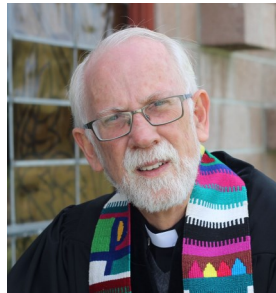
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### Holy Imagination



—by Rev. George Martzen

*“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”*

—2 Corinthians 4:18 (NIV)

*“Reason is the natural organ of truth, imagination is the organ of meaning.”*

— C.S. Lewis (Selected Literary Essays)

Lately I have been using the expression “holy imagination.” Some Christians think negatively of imagination, because a few biblical passages seem to speak of it negatively: “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5 KJV).

Actually, human imagination is vital to any kind of investigative thinking, including scientific inquiry. Imagination also plays an important role in spirituality, but we do need to give our imaginations some direction. That’s where holy imagination comes in.

Ignatius of Loyola, 16th century founder of Society of Jesus (Jesuits) incorporated imagination into his spiritual direction. During a period of convalescence while he was

recovering from battle injuries, the young Ignatius read stories of knights and romance. Naturally his imagination wandered into romantic fantasy, but he felt dissatisfied. He also began reading and reflecting on Bible stories and saints. He observed a contrast in his emotional states. The former fantasies often left him in with feelings of desolation. However, the latter more often left him in a state of consolation, feeling at peace with God.

I can identify with Ignatius, in that sometimes my imagination wanders into the territory of the “wicked.” Following Ignatius and similar guides, I began years ago to use my imagination to meditate on scripture, sometimes seeing myself as a first-hand witness to the stories of the Bible. One of my holy imaginings has Jesus encamped with the disciples and engaged in a circle dance, absorbed in a full-bodied praise. That may seem far-fetched except that the Acts of John, one of many second century apocryphal writings, describes Jesus gathering the disciples together for a circle dance as he sings a hymn. Some scholars have suggested that early Jewish Christians may well have used dance in their worship.

The point is that imagination is necessary for discerning one’s personal (or organizational) vision for the future. Imagination helps us to see what cannot yet be seen. It helps us to look outside the box. Coupled with our guiding documents, imagination helps us to establish a vision for the future. This is holy imagination.

Consider Genesis 15:16, where God promises Abram that he will have many descendants, even when the old man doesn't even have a single child. Imagine yourself there with old Abram, seeing him plodding along, and hearing God's promises. How does it feel? Hopeless? Then you hear God telling the old man to go out and look at the stars. Do you want to look at the stars? God says, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them...So shall your descendants be." You look at Abram's weathered face, and also think about his aging wife, Sarai. Would you believe God in this instance? Scripture says that Abram believed God even when there was no chance he and his wife could have children.

Switch contexts and consider something in your life or your church or family that seems hopeless. Remember the stars? What is God saying to you? Will you believe it? Now, what first steps can you take to make the vision a reality? What is holding you back?

The apostle said to fix our eyes – our holy imagination – on that unseen hope. By the grace of God, let us take the initial steps that can bring that hope into reality.

## Intercessory Prayers



—by *Rev. Dickson Kazuo Nagi*

The worship manual for Shin Buddhists (Honganji) says they are against magic and intercessory prayers. Zen Buddhists also do not make intercessory prayers. On the Christian side, Quakers do not make intercessory prayers for faith healing. These groups all make the convincing argument that intercessory prayers are praying what we want instead of what God wants.

This is exactly what Jesus almost prayed, facing death by shame and torture. He prayed that he might escape death by torture on the Cross, saying "Take this cup away from me." But he caught himself at the end and finished his prayer by saying, "Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done." That is, Jesus' prayer was his will against God's will. So in the very end, Jesus gave up his prayer coming from his ego. He prayed God's will instead of his own will.

This is a very strong argument against prayers of petition (praying for myself) and prayers of intercession (praying for others). We don't want to be praying our will against of God's will. For this reason, I stopped praying for myself and for others for almost ten years. But I finally saw that prayers for myself and for others do not have to be selfish prayers from my ego. Rather, as the Holy Spirit takes over our minds and emotions, our good prayers come from the Holy Spirit and not from our ego. So now I pray with all my mind and heart and soul, being careful to be led by the Spirit of God instead of my selfish ego.

What do you think? How do you pray?



### Fun With Numbers for SGPUMC

	Worship:	Sunday School:
Jan . 5	Attendance: 42	*
Jan. 12	Attendance: 52	3
Jan. 19	Attendance: 53	6
Jan. 26	Attendance: 52	4

## Finance Report

Thank you for your generous contribution of monetary offerings, time and service that help to sustain the church.

	General Fund		
	2017	2018	2019
Offerings	\$107,300	\$87,200	\$103,900
Special Offerings	30,500	33,700	31,100
Building Usage and Misc.	47,000	50,100	50,300
Shared Facilities	6,000	6,000	6,000
<b>Total Income</b>	190,800	177,000	191,300
Salary & Benefits	120,300	104,000	95,700
Property Expense	51,700	53,700	58,200
Operating Expense	12,000	9,200	7,500
Nurture/Outreach	3,100	4,100	3,000
Apportionment	18,000	19,100	20,800
<b>Total Expenses</b>	205,100	190,100	185,200
<b>Income less Expenses</b>	<b>(\$14,300)</b>	<b>(\$13,100)</b>	\$6,100
Apportionment Paid	67%	75%	80%
Bazaar in Spirit	14,400	14,900	15,900

## What Matters?

*Ratheesh Pillai,  
Youth|Outreach Coordinator*



The leaning tower of Pisa in Italy is one of the most-recognized buildings in the world. It became so well-known because the whole building leans slightly, and it's hard to repair now. But who has heard about the Millennium Tower in San Francisco (the leaning tower of San Francisco?) This 58-story luxury skyscraper looks luxurious and expansive, but

it is sinking and leaning slightly. We might wonder what the specific problem with the building is. Is it due to a lack of money? Or lack of luxury? The problem is straightforward; the foundation is not strong enough to hold the complete building. The only solutions are to break it down or to do a mandatory retrofit of the entire foundation, which would cost nearly as much as the initial construction. Even this "fix" is possible, we must remember that this retrofit was not an option when the building was designed. But now it's essential, and it hurts.

So what matters? In our Christian life, the foundation matters. When our foundation in the Christian life is not solid and strong, we go through catastrophes in our life. The core value of our Christian life is knowing God and making him known. We might grow up in a Christian family and go to church for decades, but we need to ponder, "Am I a leaning tower?" In our youth meeting every Sunday, I repeatedly ask our youth the same questions, "Why do you come to church? What do you find here?" They have given such interesting answers. None of them has answered they come to church because they want to know God, or they love God. These days churches are shrinking, and church buildings are being sold to gyms, motels, parking areas, etc.... We lack in the area of knowing God and making him known because, even though we stand as Christians, the hidden part of our foundation might be hollow. In Matthew 7:24, Jesus clearly says that we must build our foundation through obedience to him. The foundation must not only be strong enough to survive a calamity, but to permit others to experience who God is through our Christian life.


At the moment we are preparing for confirmation and baptism. Most of us have already been through confirmation and baptism, and we believe, "Yes, I am covered. I already finished this process." However, simply being confirmed and deciding for Christ is not enough. Building a strong foundation in our Christian life with the help of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the church community is an important matter. Though we may come to church and call ourselves Christians, we still cannot build a strong foundation if we lack the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the communion of the church. We may relate to Bible stories and Christian events but still lose the substance of our Christianity and our obedience to God.

If you think that your foundation has been shaken, or if you or your family members and children need a retrofit to support a foundation, it's not too late. Whatever age you are, it's not too late to know God and make him known. Because God's mission begins within us and our home.


What is your foundation and your family's foundation built on?

As Rev. George calls 2020 the year of vision, let us adopt the vision to see God, practice biblical values, and develop relationships with others and build a biblical foundation to live and sustain.

In His Service!



A CELEBRATION OF  
*Life*



IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
*Toshiko (Shoji) Ito*

FEBRUARY 7, 2020  
3:00 PM

ROSE HILLS MEMORIAL PARK  
SKYROSE CHAPEL  
3888 WORKMAN MILL ROAD | WHITTIER, CA 90601

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW AT 4:30 PM  
CALIFORNIA COUNTRY CLUB  
1509 WORKMAN MILL ROAD | WHITTIER, CA 90601

WE INVITE YOU TO WEAR SPRING COLORS

IN LIEU OF KODEN, PLEASE CONSIDER A DONATION TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CHARITIES OR A CHARITY OF YOUR CHOICE:  
FRIENDS OF MINIDOKA - MINIDOKA.ORG  
GO FOR BROKE - GOFORBROKE.ORG  
SAGE GRANADA PARK UMC - SGPUMC.ORG

*Toshiko (Shoji) Ito*

AUGUST 18, 1924 - JANUARY 20, 2020

KINDLY RSVP FOR THE RECEPTION TO  
SARA CARRILLO | PIECESOF SARA@YAHOO.COM



**Birthdays**

- 2/1 Suzanne Yoshiko Nishina
- 2/1 Douglas Williams
- 2/3 Marion Setsuko Tani
- 2/3 Rebecca Leung
- 2/5 Kenji Kinoshita
- 2/8 Roberta J. Echavarria
- 2/8 Andrew Iwamoto
- 2/9 Christina Solomon
- 2/10 Damien Echavarria Jr.
- 2/12 Arnold Saiki
- 2/12 Maximilian Hurtado
- 2/14 Roy Iketani
- 2/16 Dorothy Kinoshita
- 2/16 Ruel Reyes
- 2/17 Steve Houck
- 2/19 Alfred Chu
- 2/19 Ashley Wong
- 2/21 Patty Peebles
- 2/21 Keira Garcia
- 2/25 Jamille Regalado
- 2/26 Helen Ikeda
- 2/26 Elaine Kishina
- 2/29 Minaxi Bariya

**SERVING SGPUMC THIS MONTH:**

- February 2  
Liturgist: Ruth Chon                      Acolytes: Otto & Marise Saiki  
Communion Helpers: Ruth Chon, Alan Kitsuse, & Ratheesh Pillai
- February 9  
Liturgist: Kim Morrison                  Acolytes: Boy Scouts
- February 16  
Liturgist: Alan Kitsuse                    Acolytes: Jerry & Luke Littlefield
- February 23  
Liturgist: Youth                              Acolytes: Amanda & Sophia



IN OUR   
*Thoughts and Prayers*

Family of Toshi Ito, Family of Mudge Goodwell; Family of Violet Tomei; Family of John Burgess; Echavarria Family; Sam Nieda; Shoji Tatsugawa; Dolores "Lori" Wright; Ratheesh Pillai; Mary Sue Lodwick; Ken Okuda; Sharon Mori, Nancee Iketani; Mat Nakamura; Alfred Chu; Phillip & Nenita Marquez; Bette Mclver; Marilyn Mclver; Derek Tani; All those whose needs are unspoken.

**Granada Park  
United Methodist  
Nursery School  
& Kindergarten**

—by *Theresa Laib, Director*  
Registration is ongoing. For more information, call (626) 284-5006, or visit our web site at <http://gpumnsk.org>



*Time spent with moms, aunts or grandma.*

**2019 CHRISTMAS SUNDAY POINSETTIAS**

*-by John & Janet Furukawa*

A belated THANK YOU to the following people coming early on Saturday morning before Christmas Sunday to help unload and place the poinsettias in the Sanctuary.: Rev. George Martzen, Kenji, Janice, Stephen, Brad, Louise, Elaine, Sengdeuane and any others I may have missed in my recollection.

Many thanks to the following for participating in beautifying the church on this special Sunday: Jim & Sally Bell, Christie Cheng, John & Janet Furukawa, Leslie & Stephen Hutchins, Kenji & Dorothy Kinoshita, Rev. George Martzen, Ken & Pearl Matsumoto, Marilyn Mclver, Sam & Kiku Nieda, Ryan & Kris Taniguchi, Ernie & Sengdeuane Tom, Alvin Wong, Tak & Sachi Yoshida, Mike & Janice Hurtado, Elena Littlefield, Shihoko Tatsugawa, and Paul Wissman.

Also, a special thanks to San Gabriel Nursery for presenting the Church with a large beautiful poinsettia plant as shown in the photos.



- February themes are:**
- Groundhog Day
  - Health Week;
  - Community Helpers;
  - Dinosaurs

**February 2020 Calendar**

- 2- Groundhog Day
- 8- Mom's Day 8:00-9:30am Time spent in play and activity with your child.
- 14- Valentine's Day
- 17- Presidents' Day School Closed
- 18- Shakey's Fundraiser 5-8 pm
- 22- Parent Work Day 8:00am-12:00noon
- 26- Ash Wednesday Chapel with Rev. George & Sally Bell 9:20 am  
*Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church 7:00pm Service for Ash Wednesday*

# Alhambra Performing Arts Center

presents

## Matt Barber Sings Sinatra!

—by *Bill Yee, Artistic Director*

*The Alhambra Performing Arts Center under the direction of Chef/ Artistic Director Bill Yee presents another free concert event featuring award-winning Matt Barber and accompanists as he sings many of Frank Sinatra's popular hits on Sunday, February 23, 2020 at 7pm at Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church, 1850 W. Hellman Ave., Alhambra 91803. Refreshments by the chefs from the Alhambra Culinary School. Free-will offering accepted during the intermission and is used to support the artists at this non-profit venue.*

Matt Barber performs the finest jazz, pop, and variety, performing over 300 concerts per year around the world since 2005. With a passionate, uplifting style reminiscent of Barry Manilow and Michael Buble, Matt delivers songs we know and love with a sincere, meaningful approach. His passion for his music comes through in

every song. Matt's music has recently been featured on Los Angeles jazz station KJAZZ 88.1 FM. He has had the honor of performing at notable venues, including The Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills, Andy Williams' Moon River Restaurant in Branson, as well as the Illinois State Fair.

Matt grew up in Peoria, IL, influenced by his dad, Mark, a radio announcer on KUUL-FM in Davenport, IA, as well as his grandparents. Matt began performing at a young age, heavily influenced by singers including Andy Williams, Frankie Valli, Nat King Cole, Chris Montez, and Barry Manilow, to name a few. Since his debut in 2005, Matt has released five albums, "Romancing Nashville (2007)", "Love Notes from Paradise (2009)", "It's Been A Merry Christmas (2009)," and "The Masterpiece Collection (2011)," and "More Today Than Yesterday (2015)," with arrangements by Alan McPike and produced in Nashville, TN by Daniel Dennis.

Matt has recorded and toured with good friend, Day Kelly (Brother Day), former trumpet player for Ray Charles, and also recorded an original song by Day Kelly, "It's Been A Merry Christmas". In 2019, Matt released "Moments In Time," an original song co-wrote and produced with Brother Day. Both songs are available through iTunes. Matt and Brother Day also perform a duo show together.

Matt's show, "The Matt Barber Experience" consists of "fun, upbeat, and relaxing music from the heart," providing an extensive repertoire of music, making for a

fun, relaxing, and interesting experience for a romantic evening with that special person, or a fun night which you can bring your whole family to enjoy.

If you love Sinatra songs and want to hear a wonderful singer and his band pay tribute to him, contact Bill Yee for more information to this usually sold-out performance.



**DATE:** Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020; 7pm

**LOCATION:** Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church, 1850 W. Hellman Ave., Alhambra CA 91803


**ADMISSION:** Free (A Free-will offering accepted during the intermission to support the artists)

**FREE REFRESHMENTS :** Provided by the Chefs of the Alhambra Culinary School

**CONTACT:** Bill Yee, (626) 230-5435  
E-mail: bizwind@yahoo.com

### Children's Performance

Our SGPUMC children are practicing for another special song performance under the direction of Ruth Chon. They hope to be ready for a performance sometime in March. If you missed their first performance in December, try to catch this one! Be on the lookout for more information.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>FEBRUARY</b>						
<b>2</b> 7:30 am PLC Meeting 9:30am Worship 11 am COI 11 am Baptism/ Membership/Confirm.	<b>3</b> 1:00pm Ukulele 5-8:30pm Champion Youth	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 1:00pm Bible Study	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 3:00pm– Memorial service for Toshi Ito 6:00pm SGP Choir 6:00pm Cub Scouts 7:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>8</b> 8:00am– Mom’s Day GPU/MSK 8:00am Japanese Language School–Spam Masubi pickup
<b>9</b> – Boy Scout Sunday 9:30am Worship 4:00-8:00 pm Ryan Hua Eagle Court of Honor	<b>10</b> 1:00pm Ukulele 5-8:30pm Champion Youth	<b>11</b> 3-9 pm Alhambra Culinary School	<b>12</b> 1:00pm Bible Study	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> -Valentine’s Day 6:00pm SGP Choir 6:00pm Cub Scouts Boy Scouts camping	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 9:30am Worship	<b>17</b> 1:00pm Ukulele 	<b>18</b> 9am-3pm Chef Apprentice Workshop 7:00pm PAC	<b>19</b> 10:00am CPAT 1:00pm Bible Study	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 6:00pm SGP Choir 6:00pm Cub Scouts 7:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>22</b> 8:00am Japanese Language School
<b>23</b> 9:30am Worship 3:00pm PFLAG 7pm APAC—Matt Barber sings Sinatra	<b>24</b> 1:00pm Ukulele 5-8:30pm– Champion Youth	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> – Ash Wednesday 1:00pm Bible Study	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 6:00pm SGP Choir 6:00pm Cub Scouts 7:30pm Boy Scouts	<b>29</b> 8:00am Japanese Language School Hinamatsuri