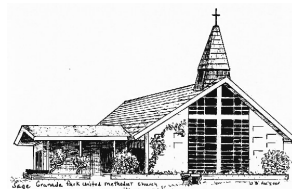




Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church

1850 West Hellman Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803



July 2020 E-Thymes

phone: (626) 284-3229 | email: sagegrandapark@gmail.com | web: <http://www.sgpumc.org>

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 2019:

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



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gmartzen@gmail.com

Kris Taniguchi, Organist
ktani28@hotmail.com

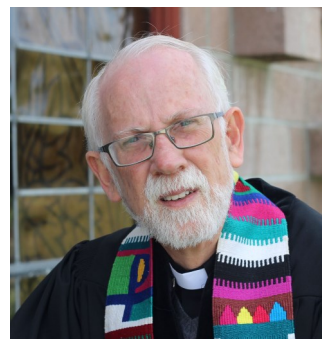
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Annual Conference and Divine Grace

—by Rev. George Martzen



"If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you." —Romans 8:11

The 36th Session of California-Pacific Annual Conference met on June 18-20. However, we did not meet at the University of Redlands as we usually do. As with the rest of our world, the annual gathering of clergy and lay delegates had to be reorganized to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. So we met online, using the Zoom Webinar platform, which is similar to what our church has been using for Sunday worship.

During this time of pandemic, the online meeting technology allowed us to take care of the necessary business while remaining, for the most part, in the safety of our own homes. The downside is that we missed visiting with each other, eating with each other, singing with each other, shaking hands and sharing hugs.

Still, it was good to be together. We accomplished a few important things in our condensed schedule. We approved a \$10 million budget that included a reduction in apportionments of nearly \$900,000. That same budget also included funding of up to \$100,000 for a new resolution, "Strategic Plan for Racial Equity in the California-Pacific Annual Conference," and \$35,000 was added for "Strengthening Black Churches." We wanted to make sure that we were not simply playing lip-service to the call to be anti racist. Another resolution was passed regarding General Conference, which has been postponed to August 31-September 10, 2021. It will still be in Minneapolis. The resolution called for measures to keep all delegates "regardless of race, culture, nationality, or language," safe from the ravages of racism by

Continued on page 2, Grace

Grace, continued from page 1

working with Black Lives Matters and other organizations on the ground that will be working to dismantle racism.

During the conference nine people were ordained as elders, one person was ordained as a deacon, two clergy were received from other conferences, three were commissioned to the deacon track and seven to the elder track.

We heard from the General Conference delegates about the issues before our denomination, including the disagreements about ordination and marriage of lesbians, gay men and transgender people, as well as the concerns over Covid-19 and the protests about racism in our country. The delegates led annual conference members in a reflection on how our Wesleyan understanding of grace speaks to these issues, especially the questions about LGBT inclusion and racism. We broke into Zoom breakout groups for half an hour and shared our responses. There were many rich observations about God's presence in the midst of our challenges, and that no matter how far we may seem from God, the Spirit continues to draw us through "prevenient grace." It was a helpful conversation, but it also brought to my attention that we need a refresher on the doctrine of grace. What is your understanding of divine grace? What difference does it make in your life?

The apostle Paul saw grace as the dynamic movement of the Holy Spirit that is always transforming. God finds us and accepts us just as we are, but if you have experienced the grace of God, you know that you can't remain just as you are. Stay tuned this summer as I spend a few Sundays talking about divine grace and the means of grace.

SGPUMC Re-Opening Task Force

Our re-opening task force has been meeting weekly to prepare a plan at the next Church Council meeting on July 14. We have targeted the beginning of August for a limited reopening. Because we are still in the pandemic, any reopening will include restrictions: maintaining physical distance, no group singing or recitations, no eating together, and each person will need to sign a waiver and health checklist. We will continue to have online worship; our worship will be a hybrid of in-person and online worship. Other groups using church facilities will also need to comply. The proposal must be approved by our Church Council and the District. In the meantime, let's continue to reach out to each other through Zoom, phone calls, emails, letters, Facebook and other social media.

1) Would you feel comfortable returning to in-person worship in August if we are following safety protocols? 2) Are you part of a high-risk population for covid-19? [Please click on this link](#) to submit your answers. If you cannot access the online survey, please email or call in your response to sagegranadapark@gmail.com or at (626) 284-3229.

Fun With Numbers for May/June:	<u>May 31:</u>	<u>June 7:</u>	<u>June 14:</u>	<u>June 21:</u>	<u>June 28:</u>
	Attendance: 45 Zoom devices	Attendance: 35 Zoom devices	Attendance: 47 via Zoom	Attendance: 49 via Zoom	Attendance: 48 via Zoom
	Offering: \$101.05	Offering: \$ 4,237	Offering: \$77.85	Offering: \$1,748	Offering: \$643.45

Because there are no in-person offerings, you may give to the church by mail or online at our website www.sgpumc.org. Click on [Make a Donation](#) . Please make note of your name and contact information on the memo line. Thank you for supporting our church and ministries!

Loan Oversight Task Force

On May 13, 2020, the church received a \$17,600 Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan from Community Commerce Bank. Trustee members of the Church Council applied for the loan to assist with financial losses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Initially the loan was required to be used within an eight-week period from the time of receipt, with at least 75 percent going for payroll and 25 percent allowed for utilities. Since then Congress passed a bill allowing such funds to be used for 24 weeks, with a minimum 60 percent going for payroll. Loan repayment interest is 1 percent, but the church can also apply for loan forgiveness.

The Church Council on June 2 established a taskforce for overseeing loan distribution and the application for forgiveness of this loan. Taskforce members are John Taniguchi, Brad Hutchins, Kim Morrison and Rev. George Martzen. If you have questions about this loan, please contact them.

Which Religion?



—by *Rev. Dickson Kazuo Yagi*

Many Buddhists are wonderful. Some Buddhists are mediocre. A few Buddhists are lousy.

Many Muslims are wonderful. Some Muslims are mediocre. A few Muslims are lousy.

Many Christians are wonderful. Some Christians are mediocre. A few Christians are lousy.

Many Hindus are wonderful. Some Hindus are mediocre. A few Hindus are lousy.

Many Jews are wonderful. Some Jews are mediocre. A few Jews are lousy.

Which religion is the best? Wonderful Buddhists are better than lousy Christians. But wonderful Christians are better than lousy Buddhists. Obviously it is impossible to compare religions. There are wonderful, mediocre, and lousy believers in all religions.

Actually, I am not looking for the religion with the best preaching, the best theology, the best prayer service, or the best music. I am looking for the religion that can inspire me to live at my maximum—to become the best human being I can become. To live at my maximum, I must be embraced by a church, temple, or mosque.

A church, temple, or mosque with group support as a family of faith has a hundred times more influence than myself as one lone ranger. Finding a local church that fits you is a vital search whatever religion you choose. Religion can become a drag on your time, your finances, and your morale as you lose interest. But religion can be the fire in your engine if you are running hard to become the best human being you can become. It's all or nothing! Religion is boredom unless you are running with all your might. What do you think?

Granada Park United Methodist Nursery School & Kindergarten

—from *Theresa Laib, Director*



At this time the school remains closed due to Covid-19. We are continuing to work with licensing and filing new guidelines for pre-school and daycare before opening. I understand your concerns for wanting your children to return to school. Everyone is working hard to make sure the school is a safe and secure place for children to return to. Please call the school for more information at 626-284-5006, 9:00-1:00 pm or visit our web site at <http://gpumnsk.org>.

Alhambra Performing Arts Center Postpones Concerts

—from *Bill Yee, Artistic Director*

The Alhambra Performing Arts Center, under the direction of Chef/Artistic Director Bill Yee, continues to be closed due to Covid-19. APAC is considering some dinner theatre type of programs in the future, but will wait for public health guidance. For more information regarding the remaining 2020 performances, mail: bizwind@yahoo.com or call 626 230 5435.



**Calling
all
Voyagers!**

2020 STAY-CATION BIBLE SCHOOL

4 sessions via Zoom

July 28 and 30, August 4 and 6, at 1 – 1:30 p.m.

1 session on the church lawn (spaced in family groups)

Sunday, August 9 at 5 – 7 p.m.

(bring your own picnic)

Ages: Preschool to older elementary

For more information contact the church: (626) 284-3229
sagegranadapark@gmail.com // [Facebook.com/sqpumc](https://www.facebook.com/sqpumc) // www.sqpumc.org

Stay-cation registrations forms will be available within the week. Free “pick-up packets” with crafts and activities for the sessions will be available for all those who register. To give us an idea of how many packets to prepare, please [click here](#) to indicate your intent to join us.

Cal Pac Annual Conference

—by *Janice Hurtado*

It was a pleasure to represent Sage Granada Park UMC at the Cal-Pac 2020 Annual Conference. Usually we meet at the University of Redlands, but because of COVID19 restrictions it was held via Zoom webinar. Even though I missed seeing and catching up with friends—Rev. Sunny, Rev. Nestor Gerente, Paul and Jason Takagi, etc.—I found the virtual experience to be enjoyable. There was no travel time and since no one could see you, you could multi-task!

Clergy who are retiring this year were honored. Most notably to me were Rev. Mamie Ko from our sister church, Shepherd of the Hills UMC and Rev. Phil Wood from La Jolla UMC. Rev. Wood was the pastor at the First UMC of Monterey Park (now Shepherd of the Hills) when Sage shared their facilities.

We recognized George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement in worship and presentations and voted on legislative issues, the budget, etc. On the last day we broke up into small groups to discuss the Wesleyan Understanding of Grace. I was reminded that the presence of God is available to everyone no matter who we are. He is our safety net and his grace guides how we want to engage with others.

Do Justice
Have Mercy
Walk Humbly with God



Congratulations Graduates!

We celebrate with Bea and Sho Tabata as they announce that their granddaughters, Emily and Erin Moore, recently graduated from Crescenta Valley High School and our Japanese Language School. They will both be going to UC San Diego in the fall.

Congratulations to Jasmine E. Furukawa, granddaughter of John and Janet Furukawa, who graduated with an executive Master of Health Administration from USC— Price School of Public Policy.

A Prayer: Turning to God in Days of Trouble

By Rev. D.G. Hollums

Life brings good days and bad. From natural and man-made disasters to personal struggles, we all face tough times. God is always there to comfort us. "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Psalm 50:15)

Dear Lord,

When all we have left to do is cry out in the midst of the pain, give us hope. When our tears feel like the only way to quench our thirst, remind us of your providing presence. When loneliness seems overwhelming, Make your presence known. This world seems so full of death and destruction, but you are a God of life and restoration. Mold us into an unwavering people of grace, passion and love that cannot ever be ignored. Amen.



Birthdays

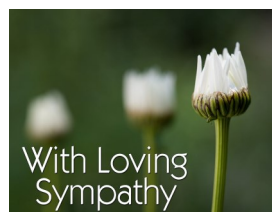
7/2 Erica Gershom
7/2 Rev. George Martzen
7/2 Lorna Park
7/3 Shogo Tabata
7/4 Stephen Hutchins
7/6 Joy Del Monico
7/7 Brian Mori
7/13 Niranjana Macwan
7/13 Samuel Mukai
7/14 Kim Morrison
7/15 Joshua Roy
7/16 Kevin Wong
7/19 Evylene Wen
7/20 Leelana Hurtado
7/22 Stephanie Mukai
7/22 Ted Yamashita
7/23 Rev. Haruyoshi Fujimoto
7/25 Stephen Hutchins (child)
7/27 Anthony Echavarria
7/29 Sharon Mori
7/30 Mary Sue Lodwick

Anniversaries

7/1 Ernest & Sengdeuane Tom
7/29 John & Janet Furukawa




Family of Sam Nieda, Family of Seng Phong (father of Ashley Parks); Family of Yoshie Tomei, Damien Echavarria, Steve and Roberta Echavarria; Marilyn McIver, Higashi family, Ratheesh Pillai; Mary Sue Lodwick; Ken Okuda; Sharon Mori; Nancee Iketani; Mat Nakamura; Alfred Chu; Phillip & Nenita Marquez; Derek Tani; Jillian Marquez, Cindy Matsumoto & family; Families facing new fire season; Families of essential workers and all those who work during the pandemic; We pray for safety for families harmed by racism, courage for those who need to address their own racism, and peace with justice for all people.



Condolences

We were very sorry for the passing of long-time member, Sam Nieda, on May 28 at Atherton Homes. The family held a private viewing on June 20. We will have a memorial when it is safe to return to public worship. Please continue to keep Kikuko and her family in prayer.

July 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
*Wednesday Bible Study is on summer hiatus for the month of July			1 5:00 pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	2	3 Rev. George on leave July 3-6	4 Independence Day 
5 10 am Zoom-Worship – sermon by D.S., Rev Melissa MacKinnon Rev. George on leave July 3-6	6	7	8 5:00 pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	9	10	11
12 10 am Zoom-Worship	13	14 7:00 pm Zoom Church Council Meeting	15 5:00 pm Zoom Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm Zoom PAC Meeting	16 7:30 pm Youth Zoom	17	18
19 10 am Zoom-Worship	20	21	22 5:00 pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	23 7:30 pm Youth Zoom	24	25
26 10 am Zoom-Worship	27	28 1:00 pm Zoom Staycation Bible Study	29 5:00 pm Zoom Prayer Meeting	30 1:00 pm Zoom Staycation Bible Study 7:30 pm Youth Zoom	31	

Serving SGPUMC this month:



July 5
Online Worship
Liturgist:
Janice Hurtado

July 12
Online Worship
Liturgist:
Alicia Marquez

July 19
Online Worship
Liturgist:
Jim Bell

July 26
Online Worship
Liturgist:
Sengdeuane Tom

*Check your Friday emails for Zoom Worship Service information.

Thank you to our Zoom Worship Crew: Ruel Reyes, Kris Taniguchi, Sally Bell, Ruth Chon, Jim Bell, Doreen Bolten, Louise Garcia, Kai Garcia, Walter Martzen, Ratheesh Pillai & Rev. George Martzen.