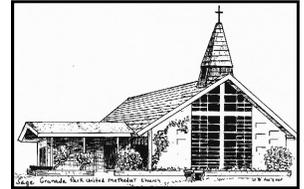




Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church

1850 West Hellman Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803



March 2022 E-Thymes



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.



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“Our Lenten Quest”

—by Rev. George Martzen



“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.” - Luke 4:1-2

Have you ever been on a quest?

The expression may conjure up ancient legends, like the Quest for the Holy Grail. That’s a story that has been told since the Middle Ages in various forms, modified and reinterpreted over the centuries. One interpretation is that the Holy Grail is literally the chalice that Jesus used for the last supper, and that the person who finds it will thereby have eternal life. That tradition was taken up in Steven Spielberg’s 1989 movie, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. The third of the Indiana Jones movies, it shows the star character played by Harrison Ford, taking up the quest of his father, played by Sean Connery. There is another more controversial interpretation, employed by Dan Brown in the *Da Vinci Code*. The Holy Grail symbolized a woman, Mary Magdalene. In both cases, individuals are engaged in an all-consuming search for a hidden truth.

I like to think that the Holy Spirit sent Jesus on a quest, not for the Holy Grail, but affirm his identity. The Spirit led him into the wilderness for a period of 40 days. Why? Jesus fasted and prayed, and he was tempted by the devil. The hunger he endured and the tempting were all preparation for his future ministry. But I think he was also on a quest to firm up his heavenly identity that was declared at his baptism. “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22).

You and I are also invited to a spiritual quest to discover our true identity in Christ. Lent is a good place to start. During the 40 days of Lent we can identify with Jesus, just as he identified with his heavenly Father. This especially applies to those who are responding to my invitation to be baptized and/or to join the church on Easter Sunday. For that reason, I will be holding a membership class during Lent.

Many of us are weary after two years of Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has become a kind of extended Lent, full of suffering and waiting, trying our patience. But we must return to our grounding in the meaning of Lent. Just as Jesus found meaning in his suffering, for the salvation of the world, including you and I, so we must ground our identity in the crucified One so that we can have new life. As the apostle Paul said, "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Jesus found his identity in giving himself for God's mission. That's why he challenged the disciples to deny themselves, take up the cross and follow him. The irony is that as we give ourselves away in relation to other people, we find our true selves more and more enriched.

So let us all take up the quest.

Lent begins this week with Ash Wednesday and concludes with the events of Holy Week, Palm Sunday and Good Friday. This year there are plans to have a joint Good Friday Service with the Japanese American Caucus. Look for more information on that. Please make sure to get your Lenten Devotional and read each day during the season.

Grace & peace!



Things to do—Places To Be

♦ If you have not already sent your RSVP for the Bell Farwell, please do so. We are honoring Jim and Sally on March 6—please come and help us thank them for what they have meant to our congregation and to wish them well in their next adventure.

- ♦ **Training Opportunity: East District Training Webinar : March 19, 2022 9:00—11:30 am Theme: Rethinking With The Spirit. Register online at the Conference website: <http://www.calpacumc.org/eastraining2022>**
- ♦ **Are you an "ITTP" - IT talented person? We need you! Contact Rev. George if you are interested in serving on the IT Crew during service.**

<u>February 6</u>	<u>February 13</u>	<u>February 20</u>	<u>February 27</u>
Attendance: 79	Attendance: 106	Attendance: 128	Attendance: 68
Offering: \$3,862.05	Offering: \$76.05	Offering: \$1,199.05	Offering: \$231.30



Because we are not taking 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! *Please note that our general offerings year to date are \$57,289.26 and our general offering budget for 2022 is \$102,000. Attendance reflects combined in-person and online.

<u>March 6</u>	<u>March 13</u>	<u>March 20</u>	<u>March 27</u>
Worship Liturgist: Kim Morrison	Worship Liturgist: Ruth Chon	Worship Liturgist: Paul Wong	Worship Liturgist: YOUTH



Thank you to our Zoom Worship Crew: Ruel Reyes, Kris Taniguchi, Sally Bell, Jim Bell, Doreen Bolten, Ratheesh Pillai, Walt Martzen, Phillip Kiriara, Jillian Marquez, Sengeduane Tom, Sarah Wong and Rev. George Martzen.



Rev. Dickson Kazuo Yagi

I Peter 4:6: A Second Chance

Grandfather Seiryu Yagi followed God in Okinawa through Dozoku Shukyo, Shingon Buddhism, then in Hawaii through Seicho-no-ie. Like 99% of the population of Japan, he was never within hearing distance of the Good News of Jesus. Less than 1% of the Japanese population are Christians!

I asked seven veteran pastors how they could survive emotionally with 99% of their family and friends being outside the Gospel. They all gave the same answer:

I Peter 4:6

"For this is the reason the Gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does."

Those who die without Christ will have a second chance to believe after death. The early church believed in this second chance for hundreds of years, calling it the **"Harrowing of Hell."** Harrow meant harvesting. I wrote my Masters Thesis on I Peter 4:6.

Early churches had numerous paintings and carvings (icons) of Jesus preaching to the prisoners of hell and freeing them of their chains. For years I have hung such an icon on my living room wall.

APAC NEWS

Join us on March 19 for a beautiful presentation of dance and music featuring famed Flamenco dancer Inesita and Troupe. Hosted by APEC founder Bill Yee. Free appetizers will be provided by ACF Chef Ryan Lin.

BILLYEE PRESENTS
Flamenco Alhambra
 Featuring Legendary Inesita and Troupe
Saturday March 19, 2022
Admission Free with RSVP to:
Alhambra.Eventbrite.com
 or \$20. Donation at the door
 Hosted by
 Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church
 1850 W. Hellman Ave. Alhambra, CA 91803
 Free Appetizers by
 ACF Chef Ryan Lin
(626) 230 5435
 bizwind@yahoo.com



Granada Park United Methodist Nursery School & Kindergarten

1850 W Hellman Ave., Alhambra, CA 91803

For more information, contact us at 626-284-5006

gpumns1850@gmail.com <http://gpumnsk.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/gpumns1850>

Limited openings: We are still accepting Registration for the 2021-2022 school year: Children 2 years 6 months (potty trained) to 5 years old (Kindergarten)

MARCH 2022 NEWSLETTER

Ground Hog Day 2.2.2022 "6 more weeks of winter"



A Farewell to Mrs. Sally Bell 2.9.2022

"Our last Chapel with Mrs. Bell"



Presidents' Day Crafts 2.18.2022



"Kinder fun"



UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ MARCH 9, 2022 – Pony Pictures at 9:00 am

Follow Us On Facebook



SCAN ME



- 3/1: Minaxi Bariya
- 3/3: Shoji Tatsugawa
Tony Solomon
- 3/8: Amy Elizabeth Hutchins
- 3/10: Archana Carey
- 3/12: Carolyn Ikei
- 3/15: Parimal Roy
- 3/18: Shihoko Tatsugawa
- 3/20: Roger White
- 3/21: Walter Martzen
- 3/23: Michelle Mori
- 3/28: Alphuno Chase-Roy
- 3/30: Vivian Mori
Adelyn Lam
John Taniguchi
- 3/31: Monojit Dhar



- 3/23: Alan & Gina Kitsuse
- 3/29: Beatrice & Shogo Tabata



- Joshua Tom
- Angelea Marquez
- Arnie Saikai Family
- Paul Wong
- Sets Tani
- Family of May Tanaka
- Jeannie Wong
- Yoko Hayashida
- Echavarrria family
- Marilyn McIver;
- Mary Sue Lodwick;
- Nakamura family
- Jean McIver
- Mariko Garrett
- Sho Tabata
- Alice Lopez
- Kenley Craver
- Ken Anami
- David Iwomiya
- Bruce Del Monico
- Leonard Quezada
- Gerry (Gina Kitsuse)
- Gabriel Morales
- Dorothy Chu
- Marty Ogino family
- Jan's grandson—Covid
- Laura Quezada
- Friends/family in India
- (Julie) Tammy Swailes family in Ukraine



A Period of Liminality

Ratheesh Pillai

“This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God” (Genesis 6:9)

As part of a research project in my doctoral program at Biola, I interviewed a few individuals and asked how the Covid-19 pandemic affects their lives. I heard many answers: some were so tired. But regarding their spiritual life, they were uninterested in reading the Bible, especially the Old Testament. People told me that if you wanted to sleep, start reading the book of Chronicles. It made me recall my own initial Christian life, how hard it was to completely read the Bible. I noticed that actually, I was not approaching the Bible with a positive attitude, to let it speak to me.

Many said that they are so thankful for Netflix, Apple T+, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and other streaming platforms to get through Covid. But I wonder how many of us enjoy the presence of God through spiritual activity? The Christian life involves discernment and gaining wisdom from the Word of God. Wisdom assists and empowers us to live in our society. How is it that we find it boring to spend some time in God’s presence?

The Bible talks about people who walked closely with God, like Noah and Enoch. When God asked Noah to build the Ark, he never doubted but obeyed. How could he do that? It is not unlike the question of how children come to trust and believe their parents; simply through the process of living in the family. So, by spending time with God we build up a trusting relationship.

The British anthropologist Victor Turner proposed the theories of “liminality” and “communitas,” a central part of the process of the rites of passage (for example: baptism). In a rite of passage, participants separate from normal activity and may enter into a transitional or liminal state followed by a new reincorporation into life. That liminal state often includes a quality of more intimate relationships, or communitas, with others going with you. We all need such times of separation that can shape our spiritual life. Liminality explains how we should separate ourselves from specific concerns or hectic schedules and walk with God in a way that creates a space to experience intimacy with God.

One of our church's best spiritual rituals is the 40-day Lenten journey. We have a wonderful Lenten devotional to help with this walk. You may think you will be bored repeating the same traditions, but Christian discipleship and mission are all about taking those repetitive steps through the inner, liminal, passage with God. By doing that, we discover that the church is not just some boring institution and that the Bible is hardly a tedious book to read for slumbering.

In Psalms 23:4, David says: “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” What are you fearful of? Do you know that as you go through that fearful passage, you can have the assurance of the God who comforts you? I pray that we will find encouragement in this season of separation, transition, and reincorporation with God that we call Lent. ~ Shalom



March 2022



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Women's History Month	2 No Bible Study Prayer 5 pm	3 Youth 7:30 pm	4 Scouts 6:00—9:30 pm	5 JLS 8:30-12
6 Worship Service 10 am <i>Farwell to the Bells</i>	7	8	9 Bible Study 1 pm Prayer 5 pm	10	11 Scouts 6:00—9:30 pm	12 JLS 8:30-12 Mission Area Meeting 7:00 PM
13 Worship Service 10 am	14	15 PAC 7:00 pm	16 Bible Study 1 pm Prayer 5 pm	17 St. Patrick's Day Youth 7:30 pm	18 Scouts 6:00—9:30 pm	19 JLS 8:30-12 East District Training Webinar 9:00-11:30 AM
20 Worship Service 10 am Open Door Fellowship 4:30	21	22 Ministry Coordinating Team 7:00 pm	23 Bible Study 1 pm Prayer 5 pm	24	25 Scouts 6:00—9:30 pm	26 JLS 8:30-12
27 Worship Service 10 am	28	29	30 Bible Study 1 pm Prayer 5 pm	31		