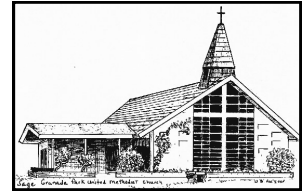




Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church

1850 West Hellman Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803



December 2022 E-Thymes



Our Vision:

We aspire to be a reflection of God's epic love:

- ♦ Engaged in a community of mutual support
- ♦ Proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ
- ♦ Inviting families to step up to ministries in the world
- ♦ Celebrated in social networks and digital media

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.



Rev. Dr. George Martzen, Pastor
gmartzen@gmail.com

Kris Taniguchi, Organist
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Ashley Parks, Sunday Childcare

Julie Quezada, E-Thymes Editor
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E-Thymes December 2022

"Let's make room for the guest"

Rev George Martzen



"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means, 'God is with us.'" – Matthew 1:23

With Christmas songs in the air and festival of Thanksgiving just past, we know we're in the holiday season. With shorter days and longer, colder nights, it feels right to return to in-person gatherings, even though we still face a triple threat of Covid, influenza and the RS virus.

Advent started right after Thanksgiving on November 27. Advent is a season of hospitality. During Advent we are reminded to prepare for Christ's first coming as a baby in Bethlehem, and also the promised second coming to fulfill God's peaceable kingdom. Our focus in this season is to make room in our lives, our families, and our world for the coming of Jesus.

Hospitality is a vital theme in Christian teaching. Jesus taught that whenever someone has done an act of kindness for "one of the least of these my kindred, you did it for me" (Matthew 25:40). The great 4th century bishop John Chrysostom urged his congregation to reserve a room in their homes, "to which Christ may come" (Homily 45 on the Acts of the Apostles). He referred to Christ both figuratively and spiritually, letting the Spirit of Christ have reign in our homes, but also welcoming the "least of these my kindred."

Advent scriptures give us clues to prepare for Jesus' coming. Isaiah 2:12 advises working for peace. "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." John the Baptist said to "bear fruit worthy of repentance" (Matthew 3:8). Paul said, "Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (Romans 15:7).

Many of our Advent and Christmas songs remind us to open our hearts and homes. Mary and Joseph are often models of hospitality.

Phillips Brooks' "O Little Town of Bethlehem" prays "O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend on us, we pray; cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today." Georg Wiessel's "Lift Up Your Heads" tells us to "Fling wide the portals of your hearts; make it a temple, set apart." Eleanor Farjeon's "People Look East" calls us to "make the house fair as you are able."

There are many ways we might prepare for our holiday gatherings: clean house, prepare a special meal, spruce up the yard, put up festive decorations, turn on the festive music, and set aside gifts for the guests. I encourage you to be on the lookout for the Christmas letter for options for year-end giving.

You are encouraged to be present each Sunday of Advent as we count down with the Advent candles. On December 2, the Scouts will help to put up the sanctuary greens during their meeting. I hope to have Christmas caroling for Atherton, the date yet to be determined. We will have our usual Candlelight Christmas Eve service on December 24 at 5 p.m. (in-person only). With Christmas falling on Sunday this year, there will be a special musical service that day, featuring a guest from the North Pole, extra Christmas carols and special anthems from the choir.

Through these and other means of grace, let us make ready this season for the coming the special Guest, Jesus Christ.

Thank you for making Hope Meals to Bella Vista Elementary School students possible



Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, Ernie Tom and Rev. George delivered 25 meals and 25 food gift cards on November 15. We were able to provide much needed assistance to those in need. Thank you for donating and for helping!



November 6

Attendance: 33 In Person/
56 On Line

Offering: \$77.85

November 13

Attendance: 34 In Person/
45 On Line

Offering: \$841.35

November 20

Attendance: 24 In Person/
30 On Line

Offering: \$10,839.57

November 27

Attendance: 37 In Person/
36 On Line

Offering: \$129.35



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 \$115,149.64 and our general offering budget for 2022 is \$102,000.00

December 4

Worship

Liturgist: Ruth Chon

December 11

Worship

Liturgist: Paul Wong

December 18

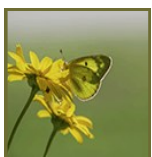
Worship

Liturgist: Kim Morrison

December 25

Worship

Liturgist: TBA



Thank you to our Zoom Worship Crew: Ruel Reyes, Kris Taniguchi, Doreen Bolten, Ratheesh Pillai, Brad Hutchins, Phillip Kiriara, Sengeduane Tom, Jaimie Hill, Ruth Chon, Arnie Saiki, Louise Garcia, Kai Garcia, Sunny Kim, Ryan Wong and Rev. George Martzen



CHRISTMAS EVE, 1944...1964

It was Christmas, 1944. Toshio Sato was a Japanese POW (prisoner of war) in the Philippines. All major Japanese cities were carpet bombed, thousands of wooden buildings burnt to the ground by a new weapon, napalm bombs. Air Force General Curtis LeMay had perfected "**carpet bombing**" over German cities, such as Dresden. He now used this "**saturation bombing**" over Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, Nagoya, Fukuoka and everywhere. Carpet bombing created **artificial firestorms**--a new phenomenon in warfare. All major Japanese cities were burnt to ashes. Casualties of carpet bombing far exceeded that of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Heavy was the heart of POW Toshio Sato. The American chaplains passed out Japanese New Testaments to the prisoners. Christmas Carols played over the speaker systems. **Christmas joy** for the victorious Americans! **Total depression** for the Japanese POW's!

It was **Christmas Eve, 1944...as told in 1964** at the annual Christmas Party of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary by **Seminary President, Rev. Dr. Toshio Sato.**

Rev. Dickson Kazuo Yagi

Rev Dickson Kazuo Yagi is a retired missionary, associate member of Sage Granada Park UMC, the Chair/President of the Council of Pacific Asian Theology and facilitator of the Interfaith Fellowship.



Alhambra Performing Arts Center

Sun. December 18, 2022
7PM

Admission **FREE** with RSVP to
alhambra.eventbrite.com
or \$20 donation at the door

Christmas Treats by the Chefs
from the Alhambra Culinary School

Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church - 1850 W. Hellman Ave. Alhambra, CA 91803

(626) 230 5435 bizwind@yahoo.com



Hosted by

Featuring

Dickens Holiday Carolers



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)



DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

School Year 2022-2023

Happy Thanksgiving



Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything. 1Thessalonians 5:16-18

From our school to your home

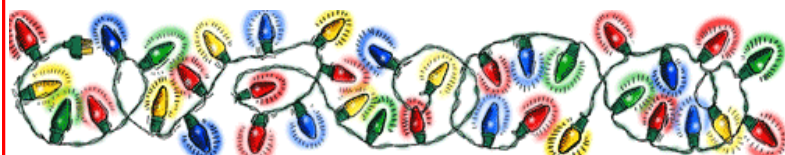
"HAPPY THANKSGIVING"

Special Thank You for supporting our Marie Callender Pie Fundraiser

UPCOMING EVENTS

Santa Claus visit the week of December 19-22 (TBA)

December 26th School Closed- Christmas Holiday



Follow us on
Facebook



SCAN ME



- 12/1: Eunice Suhee Lee
- 12/3: James Bitner
Roger Staal
- 12/4: Diane Iorlano
- 12/5: Barbara Nozawa
- 12/7: Pyong Hwa Lee
- 12/8: Ryan Wong
- 12/9: Dorothy Tsuji
- 12/10: Paul Hutchins
- 12/12: Ken Matsumoto
- 12/14: Joanne Jen
- 12/15: Debajit Dhar
Patricia Chou
- 12/19: Sehong Mun
- 12/21: Kevin Carey
- 12/26: Beatrice Tabata
- 12/30: Ryan Taniguchi
Ellen Miller



- 12/1: George and Karina Shafer
- 12/31: Alphuno Chase-Roy and Parimal Roy



- Family of Yoko Hayashida
- Sarah Wong
- Sunny Kim
- Family of Jean McIver
- Family of Tak Yoshida
- Rev. George
- Echavarria family
- Mary Sue Lodwick
- Marilyn McIver
- Mariko Garrett
- Sho Tabata
- Alice Lopez
- Kenley Craver
- David Iwomiya
- Bruce Del Monico
- Leonard Quezada
- Laura Quezada
- Gabriel Morales
- Peace in Ukraine
- Toshiko Ozawa
- Mark and Lauri Wright



Believe in Something Bigger: It's not that we *have* to; it's that we *get* to

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. - Hebrews 11:6

Thirty-two countries, thirty-two teams, and almost 700 people pursuing a single ball for a cup. Over the years, countries have funded the groundwork with their money and people's time. The players are well-trained, both physically and mentally, for this specific goal, the FIFA World Cup.

Even though they are aware that not all will not be able to get that Cup, they believe in something bigger. They are not afraid, concerned, or unhopeful, but rather have confidence in something greater, and that miracles are possible. Rev George's sermon on Nov. 20 was very pertinent to many of our present-day situations.

When Moses heard Yahweh (an unknown God), ask him to lead the people to the Promised Land, he wrestled with his faith and how to trust in something greater. And when Moses and the Israelites got between the Red Sea and Pharaoh's chariots and horses, where there was no hope, they had to believe in something greater.

When Yahweh (an unknown God) instructed Abraham to leave his family and country, Abraham had to believe in something greater. When three young men (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego) were thrown into the burning in fire they did not give up, because they believed in something greater. When Jesus's friend Lazarus died, Mary and Martha wrestled within themselves to believe in something bigger.

When my wife and I both lost our jobs two months ago, the Permanent Resident process was revoked; we wondered what's going on with our lives? With bills and school tuition to pay, we must have faith in something bigger. It happens so often that when our faith is put to the test, we struggle with whether or not to believe in God and the miracles he does.

Belief isn't a promise we make to the church, its activities, or a set of statements. Instead, it's a promise we make to Christ about our relationship with him and our faith in him, which includes trusting him. So, when we say, "I believe in you," it is significant that we trust the person or the act because we have a relationship with them.

What are we thankful for? Thanksgiving is over. Are we thankful that God works miracles in our lives? Christmas is a stone's throw away! No matter what problems you are facing, Jesus' birth gives us great signs of hope that help us look for more hope, trust, and faith.

Let's turn our attention and expectations away from the situation and toward God and his goodness and truth. During this time of celebration, I hope that our unwavering trust in God will make us want to learn further about the world outside of our own. The message "Believe in Christ and in great things" can plug our hearts with faith and trust. He is the reason for the season. This is our Christian calling.

I pray that this holiday season is filled with joy and the warmth of God's love for you and your loved ones.

Blessings! Ratheesh Pillai



December 2022



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<i>Scout Wreath Delivery through December 7</i>	1 Evening Prayer 4 PM	2 Scouts 6:00— 9:30 PM Choir Practice 6:00 PM	3 JLS 9 AM to 12:30 PM
4  Worship Service 10 PM	5	6	7 Bible Study 1 PM	8 Charge Conference 6:00 PM Zoom Evening Prayer 4 PM	9 Scouts 6:00— 9:30 PM Choir Practice 6:00 PM	10 JLS 9 AM— 12:30 PM
11  Worship Service 10 PM	12	13	14 Bible Study 1 PM	15 Evening Prayer 4 PM	16 Scouts 6:00— 9:30 PM Choir Practice 6:00 PM	17 JLS 9 AM— 12:30 PM
18  Worship Service 10 PM	19	20	21 Bible Study 1 PM	22 Evening Prayer 4 PM	23 Scouts 6:00— 9:30 PM Choir Practice 6:00 PM	24  5 PM
25  Worship Service 10 PM	26	27	28 Bible Study 1 PM	29 Evening Prayer 4 PM	30	31 