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### Invaluable Ligaments

In the conversation about the difference between being “religious” and being “spiritual”, it is helpful to remember the origin of the two words. “Spiritual” comes from the latin word “spiritus”, which ultimately means breathing. “Religious” comes from “relegare”, which ultimately means ligament. In other words, being “spiritual” brings us Life, and being “religious” helps create a body in which Life can thrive.



A congregation is, literally, a religious body! Each participant serves as a shaping and nurturing ligament, allowing the body to move and grow and strengthen and breathe more fully. Get healthy in every way!

As the year 2019 comes to a close and we look ahead to 2020 (look ahead quite excellently, because it is 2020, after all :) ), I would like to say some very special thank you's to members of our congregation who have been invaluable ligaments for our life together and are now concluding their tasks.

Nancy Leach and Sharon Reimann have for several years been our wonderfully faithful “Communion Stewards”, making sure bread and cup are ready for partaking in worship every Sunday, every worship service. Nancy and Sharon, you have enabled so much spiritual growth in our congregation, more than you know! Thank you!

Betty Bidwell has for several years been our energetic, diligent Worship Team leader. She has led a team of individuals who have worked with me and your previous pastors to design worship space that communicates powerfully visually the hopeful and inspiring messages of each liturgical season. Betty, you create with such beauty! Thank you!

Steve Buechler has been the captain of our Trustee Board for awhile, since I've arrived at least. He has been very dedicated to several projects that allow our aging campus to continue to be a place for vibrant ministry. And he has done it with a spirit of never-ending and immense calm and focus. (I can see why he's a great dentist!) Steve, your service has been top-notch. Thank you!

Luke Worrell took the reins as our Pride Ministry Chair earlier this year. In fact, he created our Pride Ministry, as it had previously been a branch of our Social Justice Team tree. He has led with intense passion and vision and has made UMCPs' LGBTQ presence and leadership known in our greater community. He has made us aware of how very important that presence and leadership is and must continue to grow. Thank you, Luke!

Craig Stumpfenhorst served as our Church Council Chair in 2019, and his enthusiasm and congeniality was so important in this year where strategic planning and new visions for our congregation's future began to be culled. We will continue to be blessed by his leadership on the Our Way Forward Leadership Team..and by his goofy humor! :) Thanks so much, Craig!

Keith Bjugstad, until recently our Staff-Parish Relations Chair, was my invaluable right hand when I arrived here 18 months ago. His knowledge and support (and super creative ideas, like introducing me to the congregation in a game show format - "To Tell the God's Truth"!)) were so important to me and to our congregation as we all made the significant transition in pastoral leadership. I wish he and his wife Sonja all the best in their new home and ministry setting in Long Beach. Thanks, and don't be a stranger!

As we move into a new year, breathing God's Spirit and connecting and shaping our congregational body in new ways, with new ligaments and new movements, let us all thank - and give God thanks - for these fantastic folks, and for all who make UMCPs such a great place to discover God, love, and the true value of one another.

God bless us, everyone!

Pastor Jane

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## Life Groups

As Director of Christian Education at the church, one of the projects I am most excited about for 2020 is the upcoming Life Groups. I believe we as people crave community where we can be our true selves, but community can be hard to find. So this year you are invited to find deeper connections and relationships with others. Join a Life Group and let's do life together.

This is not your typical small group or book study experience, the goal of this group is to share with one another, to pray with and for one another, and for personal and spiritual growth. Each week you are invited into discussion with questions like "how is it with your soul?" or "how can your church family pray for you this week?" or "where have you encountered God this week?" You will find over the 10 weeks together leading up to Easter, that this new community offers strength, comfort, and an authentic expression of Christ's love in your life.

Registration opens January 12th. You can find more information [online at umcps.org](https://umcps.org) or by participating in the informational meetings Sunday January 12th following both worship services. We will have several different Life Groups gathering throughout the Coachella Valley available. Sign up for one in your area: Life Groups begin the week of February 2nd and will gather weekly until Easter (April 12th).

Jeremy Wells, Director of Christian Education

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## Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Celebration

### Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Celebration



"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."- Martin Luther King Jr.

January 19, 2020 – 2:00 p.m.  
The Church of St. Paul in the Desert  
125 W. El Alameda, Palm Springs

You are invited to a special Martin Luther King Jr. commemoration celebration on Sunday, January 19 at 2 pm at the Church of St. Paul in the Desert.

Let's show up together to celebrate and remember the great Martin Luther King Jr.

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## A Big UMW Thank You!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The United Methodist Women (UMW) want to thank everyone who graciously donated to help gather enough money to purchase a book for every student at Cabot Yerxa Elementary School in Desert Hot Springs. We collected \$868, just short of our goal of \$900. The children were very excited to receive their very own book to keep. All the thank you notes are posted on a board for all to see and placed in the fellowship hall.

The next UMW project will be on "Souper" Bowl Sunday, February 2, 2020. We will have a variety of soups available for purchase. This project is to help fund our many mission projects locally and through the district. Thanks again for your support.

Vera Glur, UMW President

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## Bobby Jo Valentine Concert on February 16

Save the date for Sunday, February 16, 2020! This fundraiser concert will go to support the Christian Education team. Bobby Jo Valentine (BJV) is an incredibly talented songwriter and storyteller who will be sharing his new release "Temporary Weather."

"He's been called a hopeful, realist poet and a philosopher for the people. His songs are both earthbound and mystical, and speak to the gentle, everyday awakenings of an openhearted life."

Bobby has given a Ted Talk, has been awarded Song of the Year three times from West Coast Songwriter's Association, is an out gay advocate for equal rights for all, and has performed thousands of events around the globe."



After a sold-out show at UMCPS in 2016, we are excited to welcome him back! Consider checking out his work at [BobbyJoValentine.com](http://BobbyJoValentine.com)

## Interested in Joining the Church?

Are you interested in becoming a member of the church? Would you like to transfer your membership from another congregation? You are always welcome!

Anytime you are ready to join the church, simply contact Pastor Jane for a meeting. This meeting is an opportunity to connect with Pastor Jane and to learn more about one another as well as the church. At that point we can determine a Sunday morning to welcome you during worship.

Questions? Interested in setting up a meeting? [Click here to email Pastor Jane.](#)

## Electronic Sign-up for Altar Flowers

You can now begin signing up for altar flowers for 2020! [Click here to access the form.](#) You can also access the form on the church website (umcps.org) under "Get Involved."

Altar flowers are a wonderful way to honor a special person or a special moment in your life. All you need do is sign up for the date you would like and the church office will do the rest! The cost is \$42. The flowers are yours to take home after worship.

[Click here to request your special date.](#)

A colorful graphic with the words "happy birthday to you!" in a playful, multi-colored font.

January 2- Adrianna Lallman  
January 9- Erin Forgèt-Wells  
January 9- Sally Parisi  
January 10- Win Dews  
January 10- Bill Battiest  
January 11- David Dean  
January 13- David Ponsar  
January 14- Ron Ross  
January 15- James Bentley  
January 15 - Bob Irwin  
January 15- Joe Parisi  
January 17- Dennis Gieseke  
January 17- Martha Battiest  
January 17- Joan Smith  
January 17- Martha Latto  
January 17- Eric Bahnson  
January 19- Linda Douglas  
January 19- Dixie Wood  
January 21- Carrie Allan  
January 21- Nancy DeMorris  
January 24- Maureen Brealey  
January 24- John Long  
January 29- Melinda McInerney  
January 30- Bill Giannopulos



January 16- Palu & Salesi  
Kapukapu

January 27- Brent & Marilyn  
Wisely

January 29- Janet & Terry Brager

## Folks Fed During Feeding Programs

Attendance for the last several weeks at Just Pancakes:

- December 15- 84 people
- December 17- 71 people
- December 22- 64 people
- December 24- 55 people
- December 29- 75 people
- December 31- 60 people

Attendance for the last several weeks at Well in the Desert as well as Desert Diner Luncheon:

- December 17- 116 hot meals, 60 cold meals served
- December 24- 121 people
- December 26- 11 people
- December 31- 104 people

## Sunday Attendance and Fellowship Hour

Attendance for the last two weeks of worship:

- December 22- 186 (104+82)
- December 24- 233 (115+118)
- December 29- 146 (92+54)

Fellowship Hour Responsibilities for January:

- January 5- Christian Education Team
- January 12- Trustees
- January 19- Finance Committee
- January 26- SPRC

