



Church of the Foothills
NOVEMBER 2020
Sower

Church Staff & Leadership

Rev. John Forrest Douglas	Pastor
Judi Balcerzak	Moderator
Rev. John Martin	Pastor Emeritus
Elizabeth Helms	Music Director
Karen MacConell	Accompanist
Craig Rhea	Church Administrator
Marie Stauffer	Bookkeeper
Lena Martinez	Office Assistant
Jim Harris	Facilities Manager
Johnny Martinez	Facilities Assistant

Church Office Hours:

(Note: Our campus is closed, but staff is in the office several days a week)

Rev. John Forrest: Tues-Fri & Sunday
pastor@foothillschurchinventura.com

Craig: Mon, Wed, Friday, 9am to 2pm
admin@foothillschurchinventura.com

Marie: Mon, Wed, Thurs & Fri, 9am to 11am
6279 Foothill Road, Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 644-3036

After-hour emergencies: (805) 228-4167
www.churchofthefoothills-ventura.org

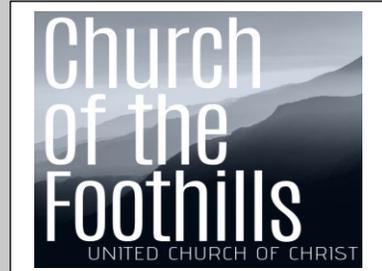
Calendar November 2020

We remain amidst an unprecedented time of uncertainty and patience. Most church activities on site continue to be postponed, cancelled, or moved online. However, please make note of these special dates:

Every Thursday	Zoom Choir Rehearsal, 7pm
Sunday, November 1	Drive-Thru Communion, 1-2pm
Friday, November 6	Group Walk in East Ventura, 4pm <i>(see page 6)</i>
Thursday, November 19	Drop-off Food, Clothing & Book Drive, 9am-Noon
Friday, November 20	Group Walk in East Ventura, 4pm <i>(see page 6)</i>
Thursday, November 26	Thanksgiving Day <i>(Church office closed)</i>

Please continue to practice all COVID-19 guidelines and stay well.

The Church Council would like to remind you that the **Pastor's Discretionary Fund** will be used to address financial needs within our community as they arise. If you feel led to give in this way, please feel free to donate to the fund either online or by mailing a check to the church office.



Recordings of our past services can be found on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/foothillsventura and on our website: www.churchofthefoothills-ventura.org/ under the "Worship" tab.

You will find previous editions of the Sower on our website, as well, under the "Church Life" tab.

Remember in Prayer

Karina & Paul D'Arcy, Joan Egeris, Doris Keyes, Helga Ohrt, Jan Osborne, Nancy Rakow, Ken Schmidt, Fred Widney & Daniel Widney, Jeff Campbell (healing nicely), & Michael Lindley (Pat Lindley's son)

Betsy Chess & family on the birth of Betsy's granddaughter Eliza Joy
Continued prayers for all the students, teachers, administrators, and parents on their remote schooling



Dear Church,

As the days get shorter, the weather gets cooler (at least by Ventura standards), and the sunsets get longer and more beautiful we enter into a season of gratitude. We do have so much to be grateful for, even in this year that has been so filled with disappointment, anxiety, and fear. In fact, a practice of deep gratitude is often one of the antidotes for those negative thoughts that occupy our minds and spirits.

This year, I am so grateful for you and for the creative ways you have shown your resilience during this difficult time. It has been so good to see many of you in person at donation drop-offs, car parades, and our first ever vespers services. We will continue to do more and more safely distanced outdoor activities until that day when we can all safely gather again in our sanctuary. Keep an eye out for announcements about upcoming opportunities.

In the coming weeks I will be meeting with the Ventura Interfaith Ministerial Alliance to put together a special, online community interfaith Thanksgiving service. I will let you know more about this via email soon.

Paul wrote these words to the church in Philippi and I echo these words to you. "Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued with us, believing and proclaiming God's Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present. There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish."

With Gratitude,
Pastor John Forrest



Join us on November 1st, from 1-2pm, for our Drive-Thru Communion. You are invited to drive up to the church, roll down your window, and a volunteer in protective gear will give you a sanitary, disposable, and individually pre-packaged communion wafer and juice set.

Lovely Vespers Service – Sunday, Oct. 18





Let us hold these prayers for yet another week.

Monday

The prophet Micah tells us that God's desire for us is that we do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God. As our nation prepares to go the polls, pray that our collective deliberating and decision-making might reflect God's dreams for us as a people. Pray God's blessing upon every ballot and polling place.

Tuesday

Pray the Lord's Prayer, pausing to place extra emphasis on the line "on earth as it is in heaven." Using your spiritual imagination, picture God at work within each voter, that his or her choices in the voting booth might help us all become the answer to Jesus' prayer.

Wednesday

"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other," Mother Teresa observed. Pray for those candidates and voters with values and visions that differ from yours. Ask that God might heal our divisions and enable us to see one another as kin.

Thursday

Read Psalm 46 and hear it as a prayer that is at this very moment being lifted up on behalf of all who are feeling uncertain or fearful today (including you, if you're in that space). Let your attention fall on any phrase you find especially helpful. Spend a few extra minutes with the verse "Be still and know that I am God."

Friday

Our sacred story begins with God creating out of chaos. At the end of each day, God was pleased with what God had fashioned. With this in mind, lift up to God anything on the local, regional, or national level that feels chaotic today. As you do, ask God to plant deep within you the certainty that even now in the midst of hard headlines and concerning realities, God is at work. For a few moments, even longer, let God's peace fill you.

Saturday

Jesus wants to carry our weariness. Offer Jesus whatever burdened thoughts or feelings you have about our nation and its future; as you entrust these to Jesus, notice where in your body you feel lighter or more spacious. (Or point Jesus to those places in your body needful of lightness and spaciousness.) Give thanks for Jesus' steady companionship.

Sunday

Keep company with the following prayer. If a specific line speaks to you, repeat it as many times as feels right. Let your God love you!

Let Your God Love You

Be silent.

Be still.

Alone.

Empty before your God.

Say nothing. Be silent. Be still.

Let your God look upon you. That is all.

God knows.

God understands. God loves you with an enormous love. God only wants to look upon you with love.

Quiet. Still. Be.

Let your God Love you.

--Edwina Gateley

Neighbors in Need

****Special Offering on October 4: *Neighbors in Need*****
collected a total of \$570. Thank you for your generosity.

Outreach & Benevolence Grants

Each year the church budgets resources to support local and global organizations that advocate for life-sustaining needs, empowerment of human dignity, or structural change to promote long-term social and economic justice. ***Grant applications are now being accepted for 2021.*** If you know of an organization whose mission falls within our criteria (or you would like more information) please download the application and overview from the following link:

<https://www.churchofthefoothills-ventura.org/ministries>. Grant applications may also be obtained by emailing Denice Barr dbarr49@sbcglobal.net.

All grant requests must be submitted by 11:00 a.m. on Friday, November 20, 2020 to be considered.

Please refer to last month's Sower for list of past O&B Grant recipients

COTF Food, Clothing and Used Book Drive Schedule

The drive-through drop-offs continue! Many of you regularly contribute canned goods, non-perishable packaged foods, hygiene products and other items to Project Understandings' food pantry or gently used clothing to our homeless neighbors. We also collect used books in support of Ventura libraries. Ventura Friends of the Library will be on hand to accept used books for resale or recycle.

We will continue *monthly* collections through the Fall on **Thursdays from 9:00 am to 12 pm**. The remainder of the 2020 schedule is:

- **November 19th**
- **December 17th**

Same place, same process: No need to leave your vehicle.

Even if you do not have donations, come on up to the church drive through to say "Hi". Even when masked, it is good to see everyone and have a little chat.

Thank you for your ongoing generous contributions.
Your O&B Board

Thank You, Congregation!

The O&B Board extends extravagant thanks for all the generous donations collected in our 4th "Drive-thru" Food, Clothing & Book Collection. On October 22nd, we collected **35 bags/boxes of food and hygiene products** for Project Understanding.

Jann Huling, Project Coordinator, sends her most heartfelt thanks! All the donated items, including canned goods, pet food, fresh produce and hygiene products are so needed by our less fortunate community members.

In addition to items above, our congregation gave **28 boxes/bags of clothing, blankets, socks, jackets, sweaters and other clothing** for our homeless neighbors. Transitions One Stop Program for the homeless was thrilled to accept all your donations.

The cooler months and inclement weather are coming and all your donations will be well used.

We filled 2 table tops in their auditorium.

Thanks to all for your continued support and generosity!



Group Walks in East Ventura

The Friday afternoon walks in November will be on the 6th and 20th, at 4pm. Brisk walking as well as an easy stroll can be enjoyed for distance of choice. The pathway is about 3 miles (1.5 miles each way). Masks and social distancing are observed. Our group varies, 4-10 folks enjoying a chance to connect.

Meet at Riverview Linear Park
1950 Montgomery Ave, Ventura, 93004

PHOTO DIRECTORY UPDATE

Great News!

Our new photo directories were received October 22nd. Please plan to stop by the church to pick yours up during Craig's office hours: Mon, Wed & Fri from 9am – 2pm

We will also make them available at the next drive-thru communion on Sunday, November 1 (1-2pm) and at our next drop-off collection on Thursday, November 19 (9am-12noon)

If you cannot make it to the office, please let Craig know and we will find another way to get the new directory to you. Limited to one per household at this point.

NOVEMBER PLAYGROUND UPDATE

AMAZING NEWS!! The council voted on October 13th to go forward in ordering our new playground! They felt it was very important to place the order by October 31st, so we didn't lose the \$15,000 grant. Although we haven't quite gotten the youth all the way to the top of the slide, we have faith the remaining funds will come in before the project is completed in December. The proceeds from the **Alternative Christmas Sale** brought "the kids" to the top step of the slide. A huge thank you to Mardi Treanor for putting this very successful event together and to our generous artisans Jim Word, Judi Balcerzak, Melanie Lang and also Amy Schroller, Karen MacConell, Steve Treanor for Home Boys and all the youth and parents who contributed things to sell. An impressive \$3,187 was donated directly to the playground project. We also want to thank everyone who showed up to shop and who gave so generously.

~ Playground Committee

