



The Vine March 2020



United Methodist Church
1031 Iowa Ave. Los Banos, CA 93635
E-MAIL Address: umclb@att.net
Phone (209) 826-4181
Address Service Requested

Worship Service 9:30 AM
Infant and Pre-school Care 9:30 AM
Sunday School: 9:40 AM
(Following Children's Moment in Worship Service)

Church Office Hours: Mon - Thurs. 8:30 AM–11:30 AM
Pastor: Rev. Jim Garrison
Church Secretary: Cassie Wolf-Miyamoto

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

3 rd	Freya Hunwardsen	5 th	Tom Kaljian
5 th	Olivia Hew	6 th	Ron Dybas
7 th	Suzanne Kusters	13 th	Susan Younce
14 th	Michael Bonillas	23 rd	George Mitchell
28 th	Laree Rogers	29 th	Kevin Ferreira
30 th	Liam Walsh		

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO YOU!

18th Gregg & Juli Rice

February contributions total: \$ 9,987.00

Attendance for February 2nd (64) 9th (64) 16th (45) 23rd (59)

From the Pastor

We are just heading into the church season of Lent, the forty-day period leading up to Easter. Lent has traditionally been a season of fasting and seeking spiritual growth. Sometimes the fasting aspect takes the form of "giving up something for Lent." Sometimes the object of sacrifice is some unhealthy habit, like eating sweets. Sometimes it is just something we like and from which abstaining will require us to practice our self-control. Sometimes we give up some activity in order to spend the extra time in prayer. Sometimes we give up some luxury in order to give more money to feed the poor. Sometimes, rather than giving up something, we take up something for Lent, like extra prayer or Bible reading, or doing some deed of service.

In whatever form you choose, I invite you to use this Lenten season to build up your relationship with God. You may or may not fast from food for the body, but please don't starve yourself of food for the soul.

Yours in Jesus,



Pastor Jim Garrison

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Share the Love, Not the Flu

Each Sunday we pray for the sick to be healed. In order for our actions to be consistent with our praying we have recently installed a hand sanitizer dispenser in the narthex and a pump bottle near the coffee station in the Fellowship Hall. We want to be able to shake hands, eat cookies, and not share colds during our fellowship time.

Thank you all for your assistance.

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UMW Rummage Sale- This will take place in June.

Please wait to bring items until April. We have limited storage space. Thank you all very much, Cassie UMCLB Secretary.

Administrative Council Highlights – February 4, 2020

The Ad Council met in the Fireside Room on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 with six people present. The following items were discussed:

- **Nurture, Outreach and Witness (NOW):** The NOW team held its first meeting of the new year on January 27, discussing topics that included the coffee hour, hospitality and Manna Ministries. A membership visitation ministry, led by Susan Ramsey, is being set up to deal especially with bereavements and illnesses. Pancho and Kim have offered to host an evening adult Bible study. Jim will be at a March to Emmaus in Laton from March 5 through 8. The NOW team plans to regularly meet on the second Monday of each month.

February 9 will be Scout Sunday, and Godfrey and Kathy Zaunbrecher will officially transfer their church memberships to Los Banos the same day. VBS will be held the week of July 6-10, with a railroad theme.

- **Trustees:** Our regular piano tuner says the grand piano is beyond repair, but we will get a second opinion. The sound board for the sanctuary has been fixed, for \$329.00. The telephone wiring to the Fellowship Hall needs replacing, as only one of our two lines works. Some lights in the sanctuary are burned out, so a crew will be organized. The Ansel fire protection system in the Fellowship Hall kitchen was fixed by the owner of Biggin's Texas BBQ a couple of months ago at no cost. The Trustees paid for about half the cost of a new parsonage dishwasher that Jim installed.
- **UMW:** February 11 is the first meeting of 2020, and the rummage sale will be June 4-6.
- **Staff-Parish Relations Committee:** All of the required end-of-year reports have been submitted to the Conference.
- **Treasurer's Report/Finance Team:** Our General Fund income for January was \$10,666.72, which was around \$450 above last January, but about \$1,200 less than in 2018. Paid expenses were \$10,459.32, with no unpaid bills. The checkbook balance on January 31 was \$4,643.79.

As of January 1, we left the Methodist Church's group health plan, and Jim and Kathy are now buying their own coverage through Covered California. The monthly premium cost is much less than the old group plan, largely because of a State subsidy, but the coverage is not as extensive, and there is no dental or vision coverage either. We will be keeping an eye on how it works out during the first year of this new arrangement.

Our income from pledges and contributions has consistently been less than two years ago, and an increasing percent of our total income now comes from building use fees. We will probably need to do some church-wide fundraisers, such as raffles for weekend getaways or for Disneyland, and drive-through dinners. We keep trying, but have not been picked for a fireworks booth since 2014. Another idea is to reinstate the very popular baked potato lunch in March 2021.

- **Future of the United Methodist Church.** Jim gave a brief history of the long-standing controversy between the conservative/ traditional and the liberal/progressive factions of the United Methodist Church, mainly over the issue of homosexuality and acceptance of same-sex marriages. A group of 16 leaders recently issued a Protocol of Grace and Reconciliation Through Separation, which will be presented to the General Conference in Minneapolis in May. Jim explained what would happen next if the Protocol is approved by the General Conference, and ultimately each church congregation would make its own decision as to whether to stay with the UMC, or leave to join a new organization that would follow the traditional doctrine. He advised that the timing for these decisions is probably a couple of years away and said he will keep us informed as this issue develops.
- Prayers were requested for the following **People in Need:** Francis Hall, Jim Willis, Steve Miyamoto and Suzanne and Ed Kusters.
- **Pastor's Report:** Jim described A Call to Wholeness, which all pastors now participate in on each fifth-year anniversary of their ordination. His comes up this year, and he will be away at a three-day retreat in April.

Vine Monthly Events

March 3rd - Admin. Council Meeting 7PM in Fireside Room

March 4th - Women's Bible Study 10AM in Fireside Room

March 5th - VBS Planning Meeting 4:30PM in Fireside Room

March 10th - Trustee's Meeting 7PM

March 16th - NOW Meeting 7PM in Fellowship Hall

March 18th - Women's Bible Study 10AM in Fireside Room

March 25th - Women's Bible Study 10AM in Fireside Room

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**Scout News-** Pack 85 held their annual Blue and Gold Banquet February 29<sup>th</sup> in the Fellowship Hall. We had 120 people attend! All of the proceeds from the Banquet will be used to help send all of our cubs to day camp this summer, right here in Los Banos! On March 6<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm the scouts will be planting trees at Skylark park for Arbor Day. Thank you, Mackenzie Ferreira

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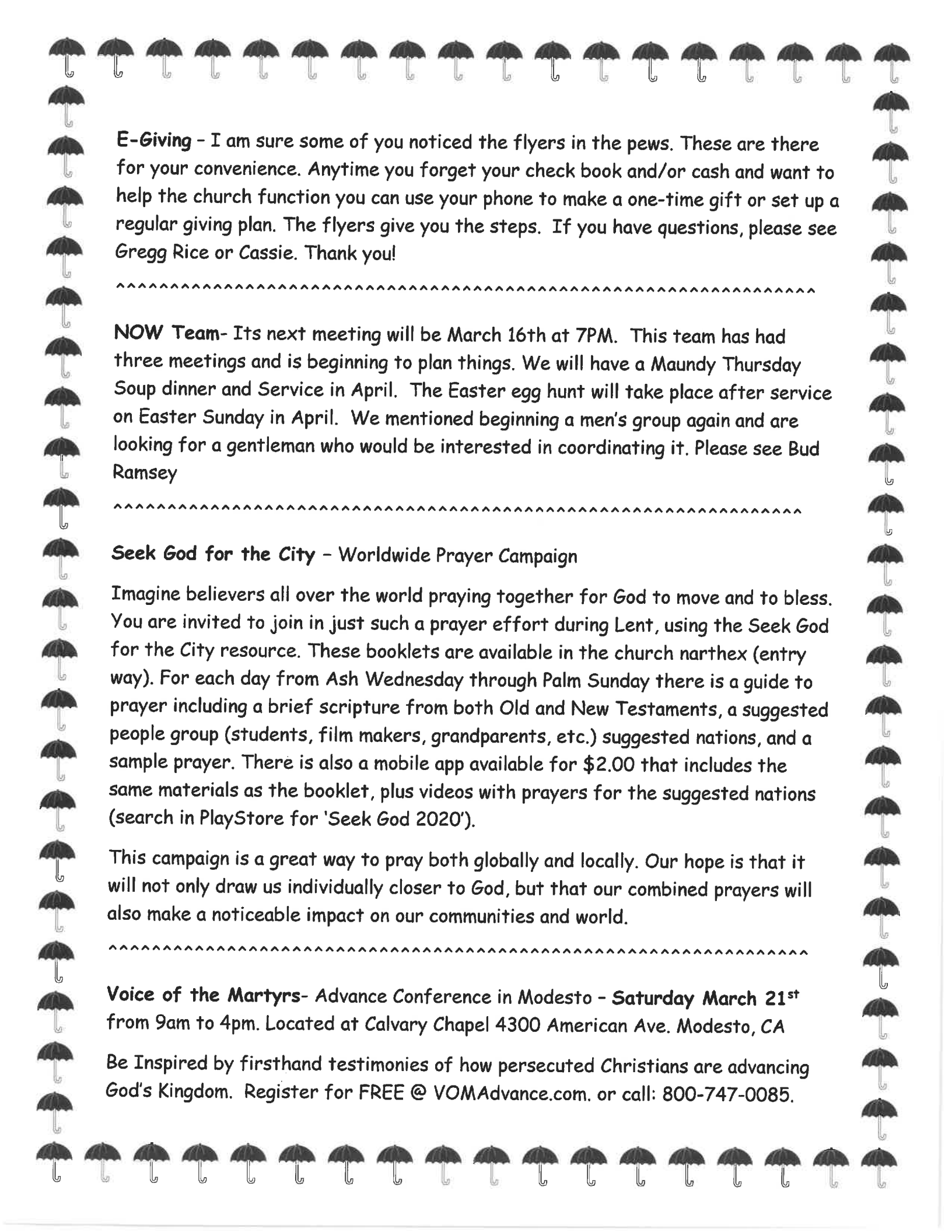
UMW News - No Meeting this month. UMW will meet again in April (April 14th)

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**Website:** [www.umclb.net](http://www.umclb.net) - Hey! Take a look! We are working on expanding our site to draw more people in. We now have several slide shows on the site showing our Christmas Children's Play, Scout Sunday and VBS. We make sure to not put names of individuals, but photos are there to enhance interest in our Church. If you do not want your picture to be posted or if you do not want your children to appear please let the church secretary know. Thank you to all those who make this growth possible! Sincerely, Cassie UMCLB Secretary

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Visitation Team- Susan Ramsey had the first training meeting February 20th. She will be calling people who expressed an interest in visiting others to have another meeting. This is a real need in our church since we now have several elderly members who for many reasons cannot be in church on Sundays. If you are interested in this ministry, please see Susan Ramsey.



E-Giving - I am sure some of you noticed the flyers in the pews. These are there for your convenience. Anytime you forget your check book and/or cash and want to help the church function you can use your phone to make a one-time gift or set up a regular giving plan. The flyers give you the steps. If you have questions, please see Gregg Rice or Cassie. Thank you!

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**NOW Team**- Its next meeting will be March 16th at 7PM. This team has had three meetings and is beginning to plan things. We will have a Maundy Thursday Soup dinner and Service in April. The Easter egg hunt will take place after service on Easter Sunday in April. We mentioned beginning a men's group again and are looking for a gentleman who would be interested in coordinating it. Please see Bud Ramsey

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Seek God for the City - Worldwide Prayer Campaign

Imagine believers all over the world praying together for God to move and to bless. You are invited to join in just such a prayer effort during Lent, using the *Seek God for the City* resource. These booklets are available in the church narthex (entry way). For each day from Ash Wednesday through Palm Sunday there is a guide to prayer including a brief scripture from both Old and New Testaments, a suggested people group (students, film makers, grandparents, etc.) suggested nations, and a sample prayer. There is also a mobile app available for \$2.00 that includes the same materials as the booklet, plus videos with prayers for the suggested nations (search in PlayStore for 'Seek God 2020').

This campaign is a great way to pray both globally and locally. Our hope is that it will not only draw us individually closer to God, but that our combined prayers will also make a noticeable impact on our communities and world.

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**Voice of the Martyrs**- Advance Conference in Modesto - **Saturday March 21<sup>st</sup>** from 9am to 4pm. Located at Calvary Chapel 4300 American Ave. Modesto, CA

Be Inspired by firsthand testimonies of how persecuted Christians are advancing God's Kingdom. Register for FREE @ [VOMAdvance.com](http://VOMAdvance.com). or call: 800-747-0085.