



The Vine

March 2021

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 In-person 9:30AM Sundays
Website: www.umclb.net **Service also online**
Church Office Hours: Secretary working remotely
but phone line checked daily.
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
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!

18th Gregg & Juli Rice

February contributions total: \$ 9,937.00 (without last Sunday of the month)
Online Attendance for February 7th (28) 14th (73) 21st (45) 28th (00)

From the Pastor: **In-Person Worship Resumes March 7, 2021**

Have you had someone try to tell you a funny incident, but it didn't really strike you as funny, so the person said, "I guess you had to be there?" Maybe the person just bungled the punchline, but sometimes you really just had to be there to really get it. I've seen amazing photos and film footage of waves at famous beaches, but it wasn't the same as being there. Watching wasn't the same as when I waded into the cold water at Morro Bay, and tasted the sandy salt in my mouth, and braced against chest-high swells that lifted my feet off the floor or was hurtled by the curling breakers back toward the shore or laid in the warm sun on a sandy towel. Watching waves on a screen just isn't the same as being there and swimming in the surf.

In watching various church services online, I have noticed that watching isn't quite the same as worshipping. Sometimes I have just watched as an observer, and other times I have truly joined as a participant. I noticed that one of the main differences is whether I join in the singing. But even when I was able to experience true worship via an online service, it still wasn't quite the same as being there.

And so, I am excited that we are going to be resuming in-person, in-the-building, worship on March 7 at 9:30 a.m. The service may be modified, and we will still be wearing masks, and staying physically distanced; but we will be "*being there*" to worship together. I am so eager to see you there.

I realize that many of us will not yet be ready or able to attend. We will still be posting video of worship on Facebook and/or YouTube. We hope to have it available live on Sunday and viewable during the week.

God felt "being there" was important enough to send Jesus to live, die, and rise again here with us. Praise God for all the ways that we can experience God's presence, including "being there" for one another and gathering together to worship.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Jim

Administrative Council Highlights – February 2, 2021

The Ad Council met by Zoom conference on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 with nine people present. The following items were discussed:

- **Nurture, Outreach and Witness (NOW).**

Manna held a meeting in January, setting up a schedule of coverage for the next six months. Cassie has updated the church directory, and has delivered as many as possible to in-town members of the congregation; the rest will be mailed. NOW team members are checking in on the church family by phone, and weekly remote Bible studies are continuing. VBS will be held a little later this summer, which will hopefully increase the chances of being able to be held in person.

The Xfinity internet service has been connected, but telephone service was not yet switched over. Since the installation, there has been a problem re-establishing connection between the church computers and printers.

There was a work day on January 23, largely to prepare for the County health inspection for Manna. About 10 Nazarene Church volunteers joined five of our people to pressure wash the Fellowship Hall building, clean and rearrange food storage areas and purge old food, and repair the wiring in the breaker for the coffee maker.

- **Trustees.** There was a lengthy discussion about the worsening problem of homeless people occupying the church grounds and creating a mess. They have become a source of concern for our employees during the day, and have triggered at least one complaint from neighboring residents on Iowa Street. Incidents that have occurred lately were brought up, as well as steps we might take, possibly including placement of signs, and how we can portray openness and compassion for the needy, while protecting our facilities.

The Trustees have taken action to purchase five security cameras, which will be installed at key locations around the church property. Tom Kaljian mentioned that he has had similar experiences at some of his properties, and has worked with the local police to allow

them to patrol his grounds and enforce no trespassing rules. The Ad Council authorized Tom to contact LYPD for guidance as to how we can best deal with unauthorized use of our grounds, including granting the police permission to patrol our property and take necessary action against any violators.

The Trustees have checked into a new washing machine for the parsonage, which would cost \$600 to \$800. Headstart has notified us that they no longer want to utilize our classrooms, but they did recently pay us \$2,500 for their fairly minimal use in 2020. We have been told that the Home School Coop would like to resume their use of our facilities when it is again feasible to do so.

- **UMW.** The UMW met by Zoom on January 14, with 9 or 10 women attending, and will do so again on February 9. The rummage sale is still on hold, but UMW voted to support the Jardin de Amor school again in 2021.
- **Financial Report.** Our collections in January were \$15,329.34, including the \$2,500.00 from Headstart. Our paid expenses were \$10,921.53, and the checkbook balance as of January 31 was \$8,976.94. All bills were paid to date, although we have yet to receive any invoices from the Conference for 2021 pension plan contributions.
- **Staff-Parish Relations Committee.** The SPRC met by Zoom on January 13. Each member of SPRC has been assigned to serve as a “shepherd” to one staff member, to make contact at least once a month to see how they are doing, whether they have any problems or concerns, and if they could use any assistance. The annual walk-through of the parsonage should be conducted in February.
- **People in Need; Parish Care.** Prayers were requested for Hans Younce, Jerry Davis and Dan Bonillas, Jean Willis, Patrick Family.
- **Pastor’s Report.** Ash Wednesday will be February 17, but there are no special plans yet for Lent or Easter, pending possible re-opening of in-person worship. Jim would like to incorporate performances in our recorded online services by guest musicians, such as what was done a few times before Christmas.

Vine Monthly Events March

All meetings are being done on Zoom conferencing until we are out of the Purple tier in COVID-19 restriction levels. Thank you for your patience and communication during this time.

Note: Boy Scouts - Still working together online . We are currently selling popcorn to raise money for scouts who need help with annual dues. If you are interested in the yummy popcorn (it makes great birthday gifts!) Please contact Mackenzie Ferreira @ bigreddogfan@yahoo.com and she will give you the link to make an order. This is a great way to support our local boy scouts.

Important dates:

March 2nd - Admin. Council meeting- on Zoom @ 7PM

March 15th - N.O.W. Meeting - on Zoom @ 7PM

March 17th - St. Patrick's Day

Please pray for: the Patrick family- grieving the death of his mother, Barbara. **Jean Willis** in the hospital in San Jose after two bad falls. **Ted Kraynick** healing from shoulder surgery. **Other members who are having or have had surgery recently or this month and need prayers of healing.**

Remember: March 7th reopening for in-person service 9:30am!

E-Giving – Did you know? There are now 8 families in our church using Vanco Give Plus to donate to the church securely and conveniently online! Accounts and payments can easily be set up and initiated on a laptop or desktop computer, or by using a mobile phone, using the free Give Plus app. The other easy way is to go to our website: www.umclb.net, there is a link for this purpose there. If you have questions, please see Gregg Rice or Bud Ramsey. Thank you!

SCRIP TIP OF THE MONTH

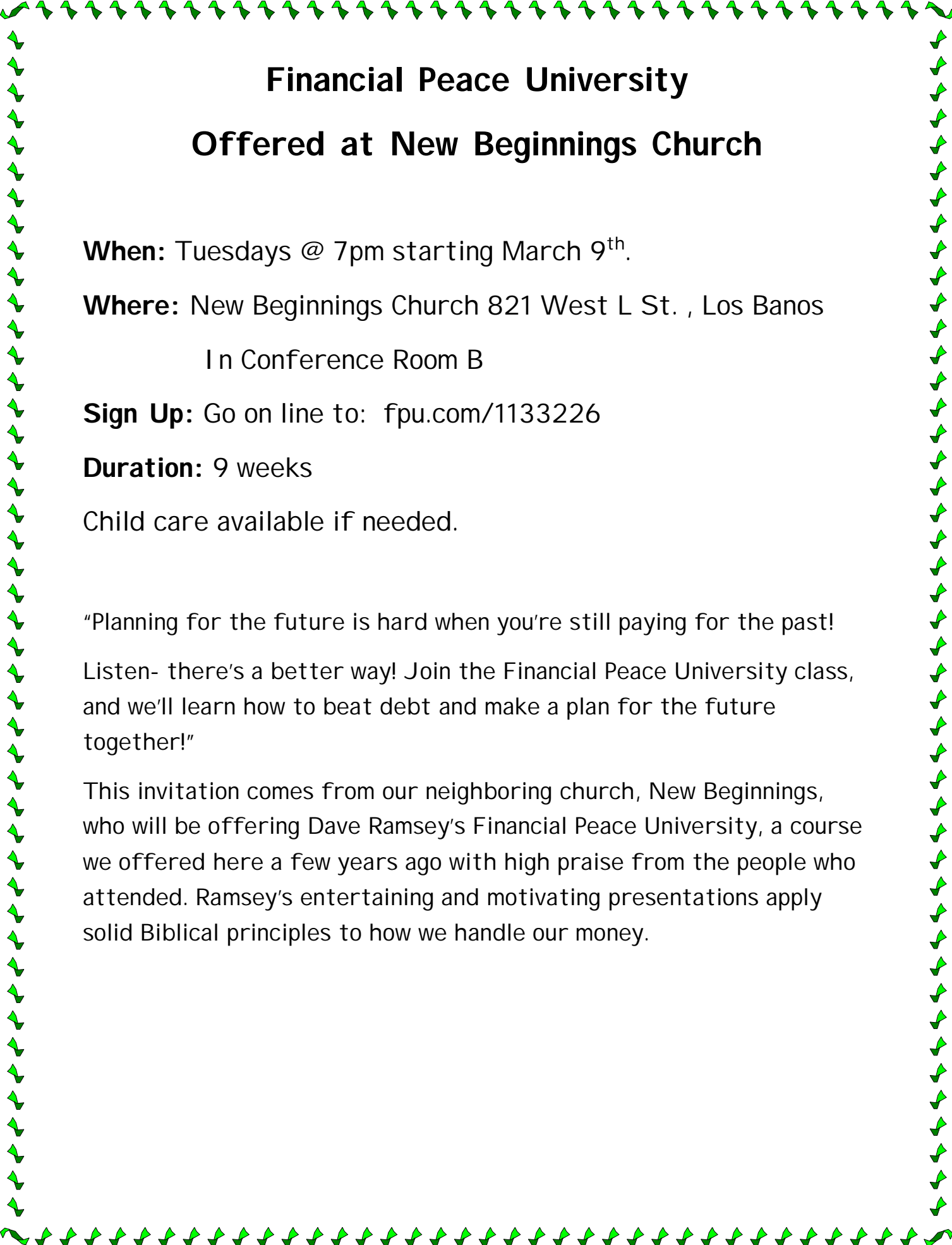
Here's a new way that you can support both our church and a local business owned by members of our congregation. As you may be aware, Sorensen's Hardware has recently become part of the Ace Hardware network. We are now stocking \$25.00 gift cards for Ace Hardware, and can also order \$100.00 cards.

Another opportunity for you – and a delicious one at that – would be to purchase \$10.00 or \$25.00 gift cards for Chipotle Mexican Grill, which will soon be opening a new location on Pacheco Blvd. between Walgreen's and España's.

Even though church has not been meeting in person, and we have not been able to display our inventory of on-hand gift cards on Sunday mornings, we do stock a wide variety of cards for immediate purchase, good for food, gas or merchandise at most local stores and eateries. We can also print paper certificates and electronic gift "cards" almost immediately for items that we do not have on hand.

The full list of the hundreds of participating retailers can be viewed by visiting www.ShopWithScrip.com. Please contact Gregg or Juli Rice by phone at (209) 826-1027 or (209) 761-2737, or by e-mail at grice@inreach.com to check out what gift cards we have on hand, or to order something that we don't currently have.

If you need help or wish to have prayers, please contact the church office at 209-826-4181, phone line is checked daily, or call the secretary or Pastor using the numbers provided in your church directory.

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Financial Peace University

Offered at New Beginnings Church

When: Tuesdays @ 7pm starting March 9th.

Where: New Beginnings Church 821 West L St. , Los Banos

In Conference Room B

Sign Up: Go on line to: fpu.com/1133226

Duration: 9 weeks

Child care available if needed.

“Planning for the future is hard when you’re still paying for the past!

Listen- there’s a better way! Join the Financial Peace University class, and we’ll learn how to beat debt and make a plan for the future together!”

This invitation comes from our neighboring church, New Beginnings, who will be offering Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University, a course we offered here a few years ago with high praise from the people who attended. Ramsey’s entertaining and motivating presentations apply solid Biblical principles to how we handle our money.



March 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 <i>Ad Council Meeting 7PM on Zoom</i>	3	4	5	6
7 <i>In-person Service 9:30am</i> <i>Manna Ministries 5PM—meals to go</i>	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 <i>In-person Service 9:30am</i> <i>Manna Ministries 5PM—meals to go</i>	15 <i>NOW Meeting on Zoom 7PM</i>	16	17	18	19	20
21 <i>In-person Service 9:30am</i> <i>Manna Ministries 5PM—meals to go</i>	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 <i>Palm Sunday In-Person Service 9:30am</i> <i>Manna Ministries 5PM—meals to go</i>	29	30	31			