

## Ojai United Methodist Church

*Staying in the Loop*

**February 7, 2021**



*“You show me the path of life. In your presence  
there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”*

(Psalm 16:11, NRSV)

### **Pastor Jaime’s Mid-Week Devotions on YouTube**

Below is the Youtube link for Pastor Jaime’s Mid-week Devotion from last Wednesday (February 3rd). This video devotion is also posted on OUMC’s Facebook Page.

Simply click on the link below and it should take you right to the video! Or copy this link and paste it into your Internet browser.

Pastor Jaime’s Mid-Week Devotion (from February 3rd):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EnapZ53dzM>

### **Spend Every Sunday Morning with Pastor Jaime!**

Below is the Zoom information for Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>’s Worship & Fellowship gathering. It will also be sent via email later this week:

To join this Zoom gathering by telephone, dial:

+1 669 900 9128

Meeting ID: 842 8907 2018

To join by computer, click on the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84289072018>

Meeting ID: 842 8907 2018

Scriptures for February 14: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Mark 9:2-9



### **What’s With the Red Heart Doily??**

Wondering why you received the **beautiful red heart doily** in this week’s mailing? Yes, it’s for Valentine’s Day... but it’s also appropriate for every other day of the year!

The heart’s cryptic message and purpose will be revealed during Pastor Jaime’s February 10<sup>th</sup> Mid-Week Devotion on Youtube and the OUMC Facebook page! Make sure to watch it when the link is provided to you in next week’s newsletter! **1-4-3**, everyone!!!

## Ash Wednesday Zoom Worship Service - Wednesday, February 17th

Let us join together as a church family and Body of Christ for our Ash Wednesday Zoom Worship Service Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m.!

To join this Zoom gathering by telephone, dial:

+1 669 900 9128

Meeting ID: 859 3806 1264

To join by computer, click on the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85938061264> (please cut and paste this URL into your browser).

Meeting ID: 859 3806 1264

### Pray Unceasingly...

Although we are not currently able to gather in person to worship or pray, we most certainly can still pray together! As the Apostle Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Romans (Chapter 8), *“Nothing can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus.”* Prayer connects us all, as God’s Children. And nothing can ever separate us!

This week let us be in prayer for each other and for our dear brothers and sisters listed below.

**For strength and health:** Lyle (Nancy Dennis’ brother, suffering from Multiple Myeloma); The family of Monyeen Harris; Brandon (brother of Linda Aldous & Carol Longhom’s friend diagnosed with cancer); Larrilyn Bangs (recovering from Covid); Wilma Coke (recovering from a broken foot); Diana Criger (recovering from a recent seizure); Joan Hager (recovery from a recent back injury); Brenda Nelson and Bob Murphy (Marie Forrest’s cousins); Jesse Rusch; Pastor Rachel and Nick (and son Hunter David); David & Barbara Mark (health and financial issues); Ryan Hayes (Monica’s husband); Marilee Sherman; Jeane & Michael (Jennie Leidig’s niece and her husband); Donna (Taundra Roddick’s mother); Lisa (Doreen’s niece); Katie (friend of Soni Wright); Carol Longhom; Aleena (granddaughter of the Dennis’s); Linda Harris; Laurie King; Linda Aldous; Casey Roddick; Stella Lorraine Preston; Pauline Malos (living at The Artesian); Joel (suffering from COVID symptoms); Richard (dealing with challenging, hard times).

**Our homebound friends:** Lorayn Nelson, Robin Chambliss, Bob Unruhe, Norma Mitrany, Elaine Nelson, Allen Spencer, Lynn Hernandez, Jeanne Keyser, Pauline Larwood.

**For our Covenant Churches:** Simi Valley UMC and Pastors Andy Mattick and Camille Mattick; St. Matthew’s UMC (Newbury Park) and Pastor Stan Ferguson.

**For our Church Leadership:** North District Office; Rev. Jim Powell; staff and district leaders; Cal-Pac Conference; Bishop Grant Hagiya; staff and conference leaders.

### **Other prayers:**

All those effected by COVID-19; all people in the work field battling and working with COVID-19 head on; all who are quarantined; all who are alone in hospitals; all who are facing financial issues due to loss of jobs and/or unemployment; all who are feeling anxious and uncertain; all who are navigating how to remain connected with loved ones; Immigrants and their families; a sense of community among students; our UMC Denomination; Veterans—those serving and their families; Ojai’s Homeless neighbors; the continued actions of justice in the Black Lives Matter movement; the young people who are demanding change with respect, peace, and their powerful voices; for the mental health and stability of all people during these trying times...

**GOD... IN YOUR MERCY... HEAR OUR PRAYERS. AMEN!**

## From the Pastor's Desk...



Greetings, my Ojai UMC Church Family!

Life has many different analogies, doesn't it? "Life is like... a bar of soap: once you think you've got a hold of it, it slips away." "Life is like... a turtle: you won't get very far unless you stick your neck out." And of course, Forest Gump reminds us that... "Life is like a box of chocolates: you never know what you're gonna get!" The fishermen in Mark 1:14-20 might even have their own life analogy: "Life is like... a boat on calm, tranquil waters - but there's always someone who's going to try to rock it!" I think the "boat-rocker" to whom they would be referring is Jesus!

That wouldn't really be so far off the mark, as Jesus was known to be a "boat-rocker" throughout the Bible. He flipped over the tables in the temple, ate with prostitutes, tax collectors, and the poor, and surrounded himself with lepers, paralytics, and other diseased people. Now, Jesus, once again, was "rocking the boat" of the four fishermen on their calm, tranquil waters when he came to them and said, in verse 15: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." And then, in verse 17: "Follow me and I will make you fish for all people."

Jesus was asking a lot of these guys! He was asking them to re-examine their behavior, attitudes, and presuppositions; to see things in a new way; to live their lives differently. Secondly, Jesus asked the fishermen to follow him - right then and there! Should they risk throwing away a comfortable, familiar, present as lucrative fishermen for a problematic and uncertain future? Finally, Jesus was asking the fishermen to be "radical disciples": to accept the invitation to enter the kingdom of God which Jesus said was "at hand." Jesus asked them to do more than merely profess their faith - to do more than just "talk the talk." He asked them to "walk the walk" and become fully disciplined in the way of Christ.

The call of God in *our* lives may not be as radical as that of the fishermen, but it can be just as meaningful. The invitation this week is to look for the ways God may be leading you to grow and change. I believe that God is less interested in our past guilt or innocence, and more interested in our ongoing spiritual growth. And Jesus, always our guide and advocate, tells us the time is now: to accept the invitation to repent and grow in faith. So maybe instead of praying, "Please, God, don't rock the boat today!", we should be praying, "Please, God, don't forget to rock the boat today... and help me to be ready when you do." Amen!

Be blessed this week, my friends... and be a blessing to others!

Pastor Jaime

## You're Invited to An *Interactive* Ash Wednesday Service!

For almost a year now, all church pastors around the country have had to offer worship services in ways that they had never imagined (*and were never taught!*), due to COVID and the health mandates that have been put in place. Pastor Jaime and Ojai UMC are no different! That's why this month's Ash Wednesday service will be offered in a different and *interactive* way!

**Here's what you are invited to do:** between **February 10<sup>th</sup> - February 17<sup>th</sup>**, stop by the church and pick up your "**Ash Wednesday packet.**" These are small, Ziplock baggies with four items inside: a) a small can of Playdough; b) a small votive candle; c) a pencil; and d) a notecard to write on. **These packets will be in a box outside the church office door.** **Please take your family's SPECIFIC packet (all packets have names on them and are arranged alphabetically).** You may also take an extra packet or two to drop off at another church member's house! We will be referring to and using these items during our Zoom Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m., so please have them by your computer when you log on to the service. If you don't have a way to pick up your packet, please call or text Pastor Jaime and she will drop yours off to you!

**Also! Don't forget about the drive-by Imposition of Ashes on Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m., and again from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** If you would like ashes imposed on your forehead or wrist, simply drive into our church parking lot, staying in your car and wearing a mask. Pastor Jaime will come to your car, wearing a mask and gloves. She will offer a brief prayer and impose ashes (using a Q-Tip!). The entire activity will only take a few minutes!

The Zoom link for the Ash Wednesday service is provided in this newsletter. It will also be sent to you via email in the same way we send out the weekly Sunday Morning Zoom Worship Service login information!

### VERSE TO REMEMBER

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.  
It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;  
it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.  
It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.  
Love never ends.*

(1 Corinthians 13: 4-8)



Ojai United Methodist Church

***Got a question?***

***Seeking support or conversation?***

***Contact Pastor Jaime anytime!***

***Email:***

***Ojaiumcpastor@gmail.com***

***Cell: (303) 475-4990***