



# THE CHIMES

## IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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### The Consistory Officers

**President**  
Karl Briers

**Vice President**  
Steve DiPaula

**Treasurer**  
TBD

**Assistant Treasurer**  
Larry Dunham

**Financial Secretary**  
Steve DiPaula

**Secretary**  
Pat Dempsey

**Comptroller**  
Les Luco

**The Consistory Elders**  
Karl Briers  
Pat Dempsey  
Steve DiPaula

**The Consistory Deacons**  
Diane Champé  
Bob Garner  
Ed Lanehart  
Les Luco  
Alfredo Olivas

**Ministers**  
All Members

**Ministers of Music**  
Les Luco  
Marjay Contwor  
Nevin Oklumfor

**Administrative Assistant**  
Jill Thomassen

**Custodian**  
Denise Burton

### “Revlections”

January 2018

There’s always a perplexing mixture of anticipation and complexity when a new year begins. Our calendars have a ton of empty days and our lives bring a ton of baggage to fill the spaces. The flu season drags on. Political chaos continues with no end in sight. We still have far too many neighbors in a world of trouble and pain. But there’s so much to look forward to!

Several of our “not so new anymore” members have become a part of our 2018 Consistory and will be helping us create some special outreach opportunities. Our relationship with our Nerd Herd kids continues and we’ll be planning some ways to get to know them better and see how we can be a home base that they can count on. The February Birthday Bash for the Westside Shelter guys is on again for this year and we’ll be working with First Fruits Farm later on this year.

It’s no secret that faith and activism permeate most, but not all, of the UCC. Our political positions and affiliations are a part of our tapestry too. As always, my opinions, commitments, positions, and participatory actions and choices may differ from yours, and that’s okay. It’s just another part of our diversity. I want you to know that the UCC’s commitment to justice, peace, creation care, net neutrality, free press, LGBTQ equality, and mass incarceration and other of our historical commitments continue in full force.

Progressive Christians are challenged daily to address issues and immediate concerns. Conservative Christians are splintering off from more moderate folks depending upon the issues. **Whatever you do, whatever you say, wherever you stand on any given day for any given stance, matters. A lot.** It is imperative that we engage the challenges facing the U.S. and the world with prayer, deliberate study and personal resolve. We aren’t puppets of a manipulative God – but we are God’s children who have been given the mission and ministries of Jesus. Please check out the information from the UCC website we’ve included.

My prayer for us is simple and hard at the same time. Help us be the church we need to be and the disciples that God can count on when it matters the most. Help us care and nurture each other and those all around us without judgement and anger. It’s the Christian/Jewish/Muslim/non-faith/faith-based thing to do.

Peace...

Rev Bev

# Montecito Mudslides Prompt UCC Pastor Displaced by Wildfires to Serve

January 14, 2018

From the UCC Website. Written by **Connie Larkman**

As rescuers in California urgently search for more missing people in the deadly mudslides that devastated the Montecito community, a United Church of Christ minister is pastoring to the stricken and the injured.

The Rev. Kris Bergstrom, pastor of Church of the Foothills in Ventura, Calif., also serves as a part-time chaplain at the local hospital in Montecito.

"I was the village school principal in Montecito for 8 years more than a decade ago, so I consider all the people involved in the Montecito crisis my family," she said. "I have close ties with so many families."

Bergstrom lives in Santa Barbara, and given that the disasters in California north of Los Angeles have closed many roads, "I am trapped up here because I can't go to work." After the pastor found someone to cover her in the pulpit at the Ventura church, she hoped to take a few days off, but then got the word about the people affected by mudslides.

"When the news revealed locations and street names I knew I needed to go in," she said. "I started hearing names, people I knew, me being like the auntie in their families. So I went to the hospital," Bergstrom said. "I went in to serve, but to also make sure I could be with these kids and their families."

"I went into one room to check on a poor man covered with mud, lots of lacerations, his clothes were shredded. I gently put my hand on his knee as I paused at his bedside, and heard this deep voice say, 'hello Miss B.' He was one of my kids. I didn't recognize him as my former student. Boy was I glad I was there."

Authorities said late Thursday that more than [40 people were still unaccounted for](#) after heavy rains washed out areas earlier this week scarred by massive wildfires. By Friday, Jan. 12, that number had no been reduced to 5. The torrents of mud, boulders and debris have killed 17 people and destroyed scores of homes.

"In the last few days we have learned of many friends (and former students) who are injured, missing, and dead," Bergstrom said. "I have a unique perspective because of my relationship with these people, I stayed connected with them. Did their weddings and their funerals and will be doing more. On Sunday morning I'm doing a memorial service for a father and his 22-year-old daughter. It's heartbreaking."

The big problem now for the people in Montecito is finding housing. "All the fire victims have the housing south of Santa Barbara," she said. "Those displaced by the mudslides are looking for homes." [Most of Montecito has been evacuated](#), Bergstrom said, because of the damage to the community's infrastructure, and the Army Corp of Engineers has been called in.

It's been just a few weeks since Bergstrom and her congregation of more than 150 people were displaced and [left reeling from a massive wildfire](#) which decimated the Ventura community in mid December. The sanctuary was threatened, but was left standing. More than 20 of her church families lost everything, and another 40 families were evacuated for a time.

"We got back into the church on Christmas Eve morning," she said. "The ventilators and cleaners pulled out at 6 a.m. and we got in there at 7. Our morning service, the children's Christmas program, was full-capacity, standing room only. The kids got up there with their parents and did what they wanted to do, since we didn't have time to put something together. It was the best program ever. We had two services that night — both standing room only. We are so grateful to be back in our building."

More than 50 trees on the church grounds were lost to the fire, and the cleanup continues. Church of the Foothills families and others in the Ventura community are slowly recovering, finding housing and support from their insurance companies, and from the church.

"We're taking cash, and we are making sure the donations coming in from people around the country go directly to people who lost their homes," Bergstrom said. "Our fire fund has been a big help — we've been able to help folks get clothes and toiletries and stuff like that. Our families are all housed and safe and connected to the services they need."

"The disasters have really crystallized our mission, how to be of service to our neighbors," she continued. "We are connecting with our neighborhood, and when the roads open, we plan to start serving meals on Sundays to our neighbors trying to get their homes back together. Supporting people who have needs."

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“What I can say, though we are deeply tired and sad, because we have a new sense of purpose, and it's need driven, that's reenergizing us in a way. We're good, and now our attention goes to others who have needs. With my attachment to my friends in Montecito, I will do what I can to help.”

## Catonsville Emergency Assistance

### Donating Food and Non-Perishables

Catonsville Emergency Assistance relies on contributions of food—perishable, non-perishable, and frozen food—as well as dry goods/hygiene products such as toilet paper, toiletries, and paper towels. When possible, low-sodium food and lower sugar cereals are preferred. Food should not be more than a year old. Food can be dropped off at church for delivery to CEA. There is a basket for food donations at the back of the sanctuary.

#### Urgent Needs: Right now the things needed most are:

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| Peanut Butter   | Cake/Brownie Mix Packages (Dessert Mixes)                      |
| Cereal (both large and small boxes)                           | Oatmeal  |
| Jelly   | Canned Meals (Chef Boyardee, canned stews, ravioli, spaghetti) |
| Dry Soup (Ramen Noodle Soups: Nissin Foods, Lipton, Marchaun) | Spaghetti Sauce  |
| Small bags/boxes of rice                                      | Large Boxes of instant mashed potatoes                         |

#### Pantry Staples That Are Always Needed:

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| Coffee and Tea                                 | Boxes of Mac & Cheese                   |
| Canned Vegetables of all kinds                 | Boxes of Hamburger Helper               |
| Canned Meats (SPAM, Ham, chicken breast, etc.) | Peanut Butter                           |
| Canned Stews                                   | Canned Chili                            |
| Pasta & rice side dishes                       | Ziploc bags – Both gallon & quart sizes |
| Plain rice & pasta                             | Disposable Razors                       |
| Mashed potatoes (small & large sizes)          | Tomato Products (canned, crushed, etc.) |
| Scalloped potatoes                             | Paper Towels                            |
| Pancake Mix and Syrup                          | Pasta Sauce                             |
| Pasta/Spaghetti Sauce                          | Canned Fruits                           |
| Toilet Paper                                   | Green Beans                             |
| Sugar  | Baked Beans                             |

### January Birthdays

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|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 03 – Garnet Avery-Babel | 10 – Jane Evans      | 11 – Jay Walton    |
| 13 – Greg Hendrix       | 17 – Barbara Garner  | 21 – Amy Gates     |
| 22 – Edna Bullen        | 26 – Joyce Stanton   | 28 – Pedro Barbosa |
| 29 – Audrine Austin     | 29 – Nora Steinbergs |                    |



## Upcoming Events

**Westside Shelter Birthday Bash** – Thursday, February 1 – meet at the church at 5:30

**Ash Wednesday** – Wednesday, February 14

**Consistory** – Sunday, February 18

**“Undies Sunday”** – Sunday, March 11 – all sizes and kinds of new men’s underwear and socks are needed.

**Consistory** – Sunday, March 18

**Easter** – Sunday, April 1



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## Lectionary Readings

(Day-Date; First Reading; Psalm; Second Reading; Gospel)

**Baptism of the Lord** – January 7, 2018

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

**Second Sunday after Epiphany** – January 14, 2018

1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

**Third Sunday after Epiphany** – January 21, 2018

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany** – January 28, 2018

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

## Prayer Concerns

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR HOME-BOUND MEMBERS:

PRAYER CONCERNS IN THE CHURCH FAMILY:

Richard Canter, recovering from surgery; Beverly Simpson recovering from knee replacement surgery.

PRAYER CONCERNS IN THE EXTENDED CHURCH FAMILY:

Bryan Holley's brother's impending surgery in February; Sue and Steve DiPaula's extended family; Central Atlantic Conference; residents and staff of Earl's Place.

PRAYER CONCERNS IN OUR REGION:

Dreamers facing uncertain futures and all undocumented residents; Baltimore gun violence; refugee families in Baltimore County; scientists; safety of law enforcement and first responders.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PRAYER CONCERNS:

California mudslide and wildfire victims; firefighters and first responders; Mexico, Puerto Rico and the rest of the Caribbean, Florida, and Southeast Texas; Red Cross volunteers; prayers for our country; families fearful of deportation; all U.S. military deployed and stateside; all victims of workplace sexual misconduct; refugees seeking safety and compassionate care.