Laguna Country UMC
Hope Love & Joy Live Here

The Viewpoint

May 2026





This Month

- Mother's Day Celebration
- Meet Pastor Brian
- And the Award Goes to.....
- Missions Opportunities
- KUMC Parents Night

We all have many needs. Many years ago, a psychologist named Maslow proposed a hierarchy of needs, stating that the basic needs were physical, for food, water, shelter, sleep, and oxygen. He followed this with the need for safety. I sometimes think that safety is the greater need, and that without safety, we are constantly in a state of fear, which makes it difficult to function in any realm.

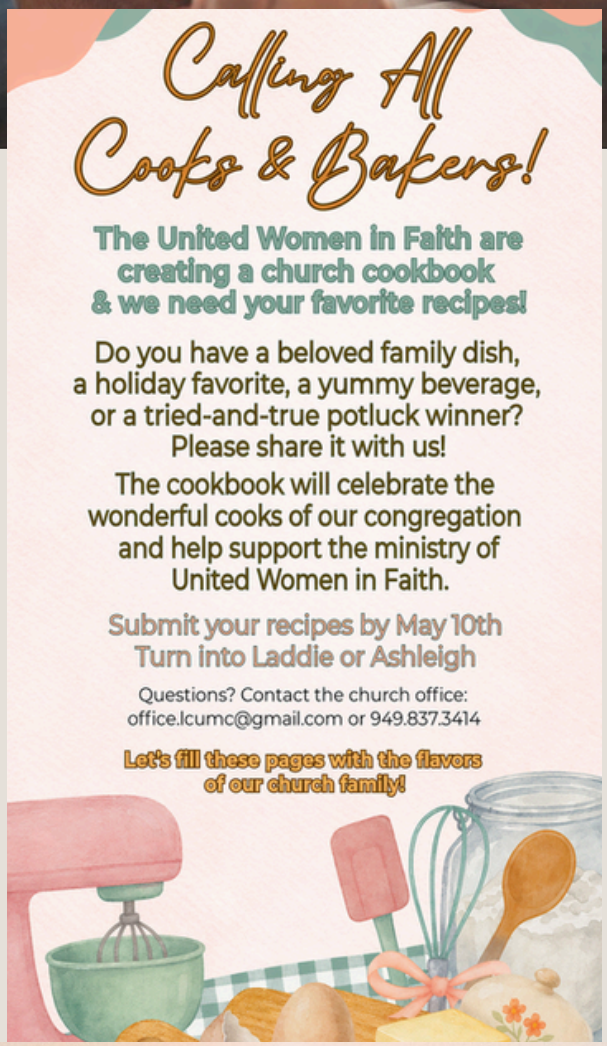
I find it remarkable and amazing that Jesus lived without fear. He said, "Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." Looking through the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, we see one phrase communicated again and again: To Abraham and Sarah, "Do not be afraid." To Moses, "Do not be afraid." To Joshua and Gideon, "Do not be afraid." To Samuel, Hannah, Judith, and David, "Do not be afraid." And then, to Joseph, Mary, the apostles, "Do not be afraid."

Why is this repeated so many times? Because we're afraid! Most of us live in one kind of fear or another, and we can't just say to ourselves, "Don't be afraid." We need to go deeper in our relationship with God, even as Jesus did. We are not only loved by our heavenly father, but we are also guided and protected. Perhaps we need to repeat often throughout the day, "The Lord is with me. I need not fear."

Pastor David











Have You Seen John Wesley? 👀

No, he hasn't escaped the history books—but John Wesley is hiding somewhere in this newsletter! Consider this your official invitation to stop skimming, start reading, and go on a holy scavenger hunt. He could be lurking between announcements, peeking out from an article, or dramatically appearing where you least expect it.

Read carefully. No magnifying glass required… but enthusiasm is encouraged.
Happy hunting, faithful newsletter detectives!
Remember, even Methodists can have a little fun 😉

Dial-a-Devotion

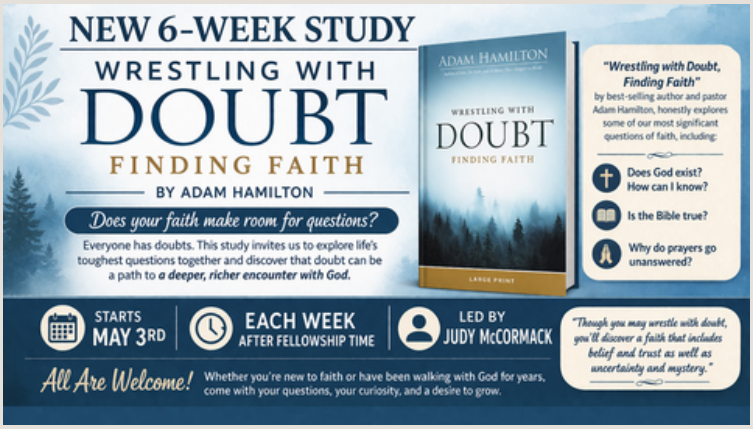
Dial-A-Devotion always needs a few more dedicated presenters to supplement the group. If you follow this group via phone, you know that it means presenting a message about every three weeks from your home. It allows you to share a message that was meaningful to you or to others. Let the office know if you would like to try it out. 949.837.5433

May 1st	Glenn Miller	May 16th	XXXXXXXXXXXXX
May 2nd	XXXXXXXXXXXXX	May 17th	XXXXXXXXXXXXX
May 3rd	XXXXXXXXXXXXX	May 18th	Liz Heacock
May 4th	Teri Lancey	May 19th	Don Forden
May 5th	Dick Obermayer	May 20th	Meg Estrada
May 6th	Marilyn Nicolas	May 21st	David Atkins
May 7th	Judy McCormack	May 22nd	Glenn Miller
May 8th	Elaine Brady	May 23rd	XXXXXXXXXXXXX
May 9th	XXXXXXXXXXXXX	May 24th	XXXXXXXXXXXXX
May 10th	XXXXXXXXXXXXX	May 25th	Teri Lancey
May 11th	LaFee Family	May 26th	Dick Obermayer









6-Week Study: Wrestling with Doubt, Finding Faith

Does your faith make room for questions?

Beginning May 3, you are invited to join us for a meaningful six-week study of Wrestling with Doubt, Finding Faith by Adam Hamilton, led by Judy McCormack. This study will take place each week following fellowship time, offering a welcoming space to explore faith, questions, and honest conversation together.

We all experience moments of doubt. Questions like Where is God when bad things happen? Does God hear our prayers? Is there a heaven? are not signs of weak faith—they are part of a living, growing faith. Too often, we feel like we need to hide our uncertainty, but this study invites us to see doubt in a new light: as a pathway to deeper trust in God. In this engaging and thoughtful book, Adam Hamilton explores some of the most common and challenging questions people face, including:

Does God exist? How can we know?

Is the Bible true?

Why do prayers sometimes go unanswered?

Drawing from Scripture, Christian tradition, and his pastoral experience, Hamilton offers insight, honesty, and encouragement for anyone navigating questions about faith. Whether you have been a Christian for many years or are just beginning your journey, this study creates space for authentic exploration and spiritual growth.

Together, we will discover that faith is not about having all the answers, but about trusting God even in the midst of mystery. As we wrestle with doubt, we may find a deeper, richer faith than we ever expected.

All are welcome—bring your questions, your curiosity, and your desire to grow.

May & June Liturgist

May 3rd	Laddie Perez
May 10th	Lily Hong
May 17th	Bev Miller
May 24th	Don Forden
May 31st	Hanne Booth
June 7th	Pendra LaFee
June 14th	Frank Bristol
June 21st	Marilyn Nicolas
June 28th	Meg Estrada





May Birthdays

Liz Heacock	May 5th	Connie Gould	May 19th
Les Keeler	May 8th	Samuel Nicolas	May 25th
Rodel Villanueva	May 16th	Sherry Atkins	May 28th
Linda Agens	May 17th	Sheila Capulong	May 28th
Carol McClure	May 18th	Dick Obermayer	May 28th
		Romulo Villanueva	May 30th



May Anniversaries

Sally & Rodelio Villanueva May 25th

Usher Schedule

May 3rd	Rex Danford & Marilyn Nicolas
May 10th	Judy & Art Feldra
May 17th	Kelly Lafee & Don Forden
May 24th	Frank Bristol & Teri Lancey
May 31st	Judy & Art Feldra



Please remember that we can give to the needy of our church and community at any time through the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. To contribute to this fund simply write a check to LCUMC and include "Pastor's Discretionary" in the memo. Include your contribution in the Sunday offering plate or send it to the Church Office. Thank You!!



Sermon Themes

May 3rd – John 14:1-14 – The Way

It is interesting that the early followers of Christ called this journey "The Way." There was no establishment of rituals, doctrines, or institutions for the followers of this way, simply a following of the life that Jesus exemplified. It this remarkable discourse, Jesus announces that he is "the way and the truth and the life." What do we understand that to mean for our lives?

May 10th – Romans 5:1-5, 15-17 – My Computer Gave Me Hope

Festival of the Christian Home/Mother's Day
How fortunate we are to have so many retired pastors in our congregation who are willing to share their wisdom and experience. Rev. Virgil Brady, pastor for many years in the Kansas Conference and author of many books, will be bringing the message on this special day. The English Handbells will also share music.

May 17th – Acts 16-14, John 17:1-11 – The Ultimate Gift

The passage in Acts speaks of the historical event of Jesus being lifted up, a cloud taking him out of their sight. They just stand there gazing up until two "men in white robes" tell them he will return. John 17 allows us to hear the final prayer of Jesus regarding his followers – his gift to them.

May 24th – Acts 2:1-21 – Pentecost – A Downspout

It was with great amazement that people from at least seventeen different geographical areas heard, in their own language, the message from the eleven apostles. But Peter takes over and quotes from the prophecy of Joel, elaborating on what the Spirit of God is able and planning to do.

May 31st– Genesis 1:1-2:4 – What Hath God Wrought?

The story of creation has been interpreted, understood, and preached in thousands of ways. As we explore the direct and implied messages in Genesis, chapter one, we ask what it means to be part of God's creation and how we fit into the eternal plan of life.



May

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting 11:30am The Gathering	2 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting
3 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Time 11:00am Adult Sunday School 11:00am Trustees Meeting 1:00pm All Church Walk 6:00pm AA	4 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:00am Outreach Meeting 11:00am Staff Meeting 12:00pm Al-Anon Meeting 2:30pm Fellowship Committee Meeting 7:00pm AA Monday Night 12 & 12	5 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:30am Bell Practice 11:00am Prayer Group 6:00pm WW Meeting 7:00pm Scouts	6 6:30am AA Do It Sober 10:30am Tellers 1:00pm OK Chorale 6:00pm Hula Lessons 7:00pm Choir	7 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:30am WW Meeting 1:00pm 8 is Enough	8 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting 11:30am The Gathering	9 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:00am Vision Team Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting
10 Mothers Day 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Time 11:00am Adult Sunday School 6:00pm AA	11 6:30am AA Do It Sober 10:30am Worship Committee Meeting 12:00pm Al-Anon Meeting 12:30pm Non-Competitive Bridge 7:00pm AA Monday Night 12 & 12	12 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:30am Bell Practice 11:00am Prayer Group 6:00pm WW Meeting 7:00pm Admin Council Meeting/ Special Charge Conference 7:00pm Scouts	13 6:30am AA Do It Sober 10:30am Tellers 1:00pm OK Chorale 6:00pm Hula Lessons 7:00pm Choir	14 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:30am WW Meeting 1:00pm 8 is Enough	15 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting 11:30am The Gathering 4:30pm KUWC Mens Meeting & LOUVC Mens Group	16 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am Men's Group 9:30am WW Meeting
17 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Time 11:00am Adult Sunday School 6:00pm AA	18 6:30am AA Do It Sober 12:00pm Al-Anon Meeting 7:00pm AA Monday Night 12 & 12	19 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Prep 9:30am Bell Practice 11:00am Prayer Group 6:00pm WW Meeting 7:00pm Scouts	20 6:30am AA Do It Sober 10:30am Tellers 1:00pm OK Chorale 6:00pm Hula Lessons 7:00pm Choir	21 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:30am WW Meeting 1:00pm 8 is Enough	22 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting 11:30am The Gathering	23 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting
24 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Time 11:00am Adult Sunday School 6:00pm AA	25 6:30am AA Do It Sober 12:00pm Al-Anon Meeting 12:30pm Non-Competitive Bridge 7:00pm AA Monday Night 12 & 12	26 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Prep 9:30am Bell Practice 11:00am Prayer Group 6:00pm WW Meeting 7:00pm Scouts	27 6:30am AA Do It Sober 10:30am Tellers 11:00am Lunch Bunch 11:00am Men's Group Planning Meeting 1:00pm OK Chorale 7:00pm Choir	28 6:30am AA Do It Sober 9:30am WW Meeting 1:00pm 8 is Enough	29 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting 11:30am The Gathering	30 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:00am WW Meeting 9:30am WW Meeting
31 6:30am AA Do It Sober 8:30am Choir Rehearsal 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship Time 11:00am Adult Sunday School 6:00pm AA						

Fellowship Opportunities









Shuffle, Deal, and Laugh a Little!

Love playing bridge, but not the pressure of high-stakes games? Join our church bridge group for fun, fellowship, and plenty of laughter. We're all about good cards, good company, and maybe even a few good snacks.
No trophies, no stress—just friends around the table. Come play a hand (or two)!

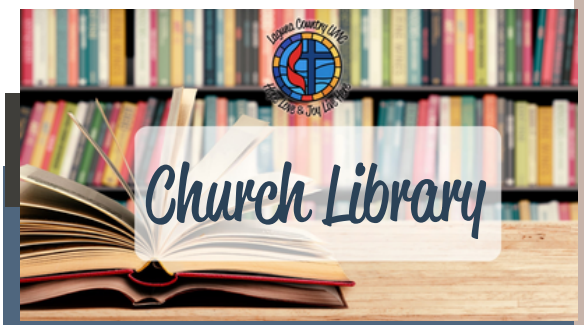
Check out our services at
Lagunacountryumc.org
or on
Laguna Country UMC
YouTube

Fellowship Opportunities









Help Us Start Our Church Library!

We're creating a cozy church library—and we need your help!
Please donate gently used books like devotionals, Bible studies, children's books, or wholesome fiction.
Drop off donations in the church office during the week or in the foyer on Sundays.
Thank you for helping us build a library for everyone to enjoy!

JOIN US AS WE

CELEBRATE Mother's Day!

DURING

Fellowship Time

ENJOY CAKE, FELLOWSHIP & A SPECIAL SALE BY



SHEPHERD'S FIELD
HANDMADE IN BETHLEHEM & JERUSALEM
ETHICAL WOOD. EMPOWERING FAMILIES.

Handcrafted olive wood gifts made by Christian families in Bethlehem and Jerusalem.
Every purchase supports their families and preserves this rich heritage.

WE WERE BLESSED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE THIS JUNE IN **INDIAN WELLS** with the support and encouragement of our Bishop.

EXAMPLES OF HANDMADE GIFTS



Crosses, Nativity sets, Rosaries, Keychains, Mugs, Ornaments and more!

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH OUR BROTHERS & SISTERS IN CHRIST

By purchasing these handmade olive wood gifts, you are not only taking home a beautiful treasure, but also showing love and support to our Christian family in the Holy Land.

Thank you for making a difference!

YOUR PURCHASE MAKES AN IMPACT

- **SUPPORTS CHRISTIAN FAMILIES** — Creates jobs and provides steady income for families in Bethlehem & Jerusalem.
- **PRESERVES A CHRISTIAN HERITAGE** — Helps keep alive the ancient art of olive wood carving passed down for generations.
- **STRENGTHENS THE COMMUNITY** — Empowers the Christian presence in the Holy Land to remain and thrive.
- **INSPIRES FAITH & CONNECTION** — Each piece is a reminder of the Holy Land and the enduring Christian faith.

LET'S CELEBRATE MOTHERS, OUR FAITH, AND OUR SHARED MISSION OF LOVE!

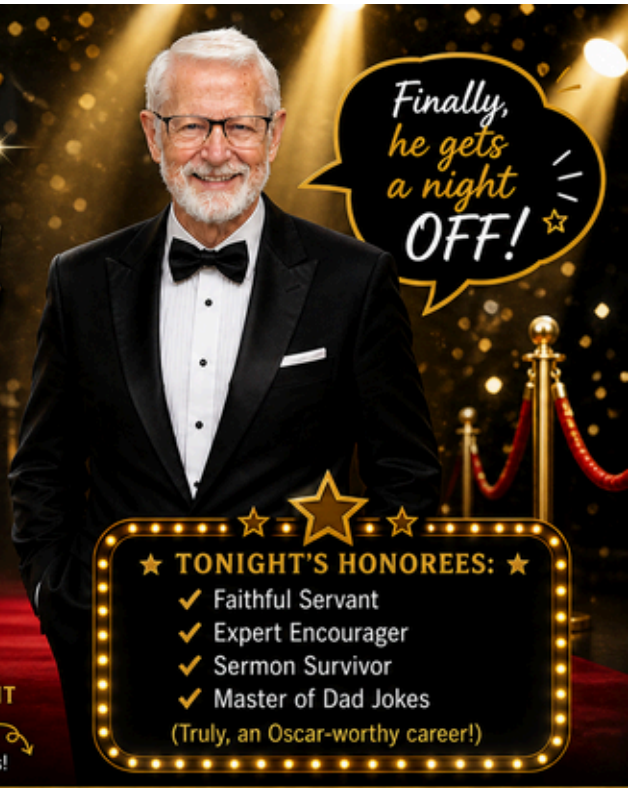
We can't wait to celebrate with you!

AND THE AWARD FOR...

A LIFETIME OF AWESOME

GOES TO...

Pastor David!





JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE
PASTOR DAVID'S RETIREMENT!

Sunday
JUNE 28TH
DURING FELLOWSHIP TIME

TONIGHT'S HONOREES:
- ✓ Faithful Servant
- ✓ Expert Encourager
- ✓ Sermon Survivor
- ✓ Master of Dad Jokes

(Truly, an Oscar-worthy career!)

CATERED LUNCH — Because even legends deserve a great meal!

CAKE — For a sweet send-off!

ENTERTAINMENT — Laughs, surprises, and maybe a few embarrassing stories!

COME CELEBRATE THE MAN, THE MYTH, THE LEGEND—PASTOR DAVID!

Retirement: He's not retiring from life... just from our early morning alarms!

What's Going On

Meet Our New Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Tipton

Dear Siblings in Christ of Laguna Country United Methodist Church,



Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ. It is with immense joy and a sense of holy anticipation that I write this letter to introduce myself. Recently, Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank appointed me to serve as your Lead Pastor beginning July 1st. I have already begun to lift your congregation up in my prayers, and I am eager to join you in the ministry God is unfolding in Laguna Woods.

My Background & Calling

To give you a bit of my story: I have spent the last 15 or so years discerning and living into my call to ministry that is now culminating in my ordination as a Deacon this June. My path has been a unique blend of the sanctuary and the academy. I hold a Ph.D. in New Testament and Early Christianity from the Drew Theological School, where I also attended Seminary, and my heart for academic research remains very much alive. I am currently in the process of transitioning my dissertation—an ecological reading of the Gospel of Mark—into a full manuscript for publication. For me, scholarship and the pulpit are deeply connected. It is about understanding how the ancient roots of our faith speak to the urgent needs of justice, compassion, and our relationship with all of God's creation in our world today.

The Heart of a Deacon

In the United Methodist tradition, a Deacon is called to be a "bridge" between the church and the world. While Deacons often serve in specialized roles outside the local church, I have felt a persistent call to bring that "bridge-building" heart into the life of a local congregation. I believe a church is at its best when its doors are wide open to the neighborhood, and I am thrilled to lead a community that shares a heart for service.

Meet Our New Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Tipton

My Family

I won't be arriving alone. My wife, Christine, who is a dedicated educator (science specialist teaching TK through 6th grade) in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, and our two daughters, Elia (10) and Alexandra (7), are just as excited for this new chapter of our lives. We are a family that values home-made meals (usually cooked by yours truly over a BBQ), the beauty of the outdoors, and the deep connections found in a church family.

A Shared Journey

I am coming to you after four years of serving four wonderful congregations: Community UMC in Huntington Beach, Mesa Verde UMC, and First UMC of Costa Mesa, and Christ Church by the Sea UMC in Newport Beach. While at these congregations, I have served as the Shared Teaching Pastor, focusing on the ministry of teaching, being a connecting point between the congregations, and leading ministries of justice and compassion outside the four walls of the church.

I am not coming with a rigid blueprint, but with a desire to listen to your stories, learn your traditions, and discern together how God is calling us to serve your community next. I am especially grateful for the leadership of Pastor David. We have already had the chance to share a meal and chat for over five hours; hearing him speak about the vibrancy and excitement of this church has made me all the more eager to join your ministry.

I was recently asked: "What is your vision for this church?" I sat with that question for a moment, and responded, "Well, I don't really know the folks there yet, so I can't really answer, but if there is one thing I feel called to do, it is to care for the people of Laguna Country so that they can then, in turn, feel empowered to go out and care for those in their community." I hope we can experience the love, the grace, and the care that God provides through our hands together, and then share that with your community, with the world.

As we look toward July 1st, please know that I am already thankful for you. I look forward to the many sacred encounters we will share—the Sunday mornings, the quiet moments of prayer, and the active work of justice in the world.

May the peace of Christ be with you all during this season of transition. I look forward to meeting you soon.

With hope and gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Brian James Tipton

Rev Dr Brian James Tipton





What's Going On

You will soon see changes in the sanctuary. Many months ago, after Pastor B.J. Beu brought the choir down from the choir loft onto the sanctuary floor, there was talk about building risers for the choir so they could see and be seen. Many ideas were given and bids received from contractors before the final plans were approved by the Board of Trustees.

A contractor was selected, the very sturdy risers are being built with several safety factors, and within the next two weeks, you will see risers with three tiers. They will be placed just to the right of the organ, which was brought down from the choir loft several weeks ago. The hand bell choir, which has increased in numbers, is now using the choir loft. This project of constructing the choir risers is being financed by an anonymous donor.

In addition, new chairs are being purchased for the choir using money that was contributed several years ago for that purpose. The chairs, like the risers, are very sturdy and safe for our members.

We are also in the process of receiving bids for updating our audio system. The many lines of cords and cables on the floor of the sanctuary present a hazard, and it is timely that we make changes at the same time that we are installing choir risers. The audio system improvements will also be funded by an anonymous donor.



LAGUNA COUNTRY UMC

MEN'S BREAKFAST

FAITH · FELLOWSHIP · FOOD





Serving Our Community

Faith In Action





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