

# Pastor's Update

## July/August/September 2022

### WORSHIP SERVICES

#### Pre-Service Congregational Singing – Come Sing or Enjoy Listening!

Now and through August, we will be singing some of our favorite songs for about 10 minutes before beginning our 10 AM Sunday worship services. You are invited to email or bring a written list of your favorite hymns. Our music director, Emily, will collect the titles and work them into the rotation of songs.

**Sunday, July 31<sup>st</sup> @ 10:00 AM**    **Contemplative Worship** - *Pastor Brandon*, facilitator

*PLEASE NOTE: This service WILL NOT BE "LIVE STREAMED".*

Contemplative services are not our typical traditional style of worship. However, the contemplative service derives from a more ancient style of worship, which honors the activity of God's Spirit in the stillness of those gathered. On months that include a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, we will worship in this way. Rather than our traditional hymns, we will sing in the Taize style of music, short sentences from scripture which are sung repeatedly so they may serve as a way that allows us to become aware of our thoughts, feelings, and of the collective expression of our siblings in that space; often those who worship in this way experience a mystical presence – i.e. an immersive experience of God. Instead of the usual sermon, a select scripture will be explored in the ancient practice of "lectio divina" – see this article for one way to practice <https://www.soulshepherding.org/lectio-divina-guides/>. So, please come for more lengthier spaces of stillness than is available in our typical worship service. And if you haven't experienced this kind of worship before, please come with an open heart, mind, and welcome the nuances of this type of worship. You may discover an intimacy with God and others you previously have not known! It is a gift; I hope you will receive it as such.

### GUEST PREACHERS

Aug 7<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 AM

**Rev. Kim Montenegro**, UOP Campus Chaplain

Aug 14<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 AM

**Rev. Ron Swisher**, pastor emeritus

Aug 21<sup>st</sup> @ 10:00 AM

**Rev. Pamela Cummings**, pastor emeritus

Aug 28<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 AM

**Lauren Jewett**, UC Davis – CA House Campus Minister

### AUGUST – Congregational Care

In the United Methodist Church pastors are granted four weeks of vacation, one week of continuing education, and one week of service in a church camp each year. This year, I'm taking all four weeks at one time – August. Our Staff-Parish Relations Committee recommended, and our Church Council voted to approve my proposal.

The timing seems good, because, typically, August is a time to breathe before diving into the administrative work and worship of the fall and Advent/Christmas seasons. Bishops and District Superintendents often take their vacations this time of the year, as well. In fact, our District Superintendent is on vacation at the moment. However, retired clergy and local clergy colleagues are faithful to serve in my absence and will provide pastoral care, as well. Their presence and message will be a blessing.



up, ask questions, share ideas, spend a bit of time together. If it goes well, I'll continue this in coming months. Use the link and join in as often as you like!

### **Tuesdays:**

**September 6<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 PM** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88139170301?pwd=REFHREtKVU90cFZlNjZME5jVWZ0dz09>

**September 20<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 PM** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87658175986?pwd=ck5uNHVqUTFLUS9nZFhOMWVoRS9odz09>

## **WORSHIP SERVICES in SEPTEMBER**

### **NEW Sermon Series: “Having Words with Jesus”**

“Let’s face it, sometimes talking with Jesus is a difficult task. Or maybe we should say, listening to Jesus can sometimes be hard. Jesus has a way of getting to difficult, hard-to-hear issues quickly and easily. Sometimes it is in a story where he is revealing to us our own secret sins; other times, it is the answer to a question that catches us in our prejudice or blindness. Sometimes, it is a teaching that we struggle to wrap our heads around. These are his words - words we believe are valuable, words with which we need to wrestle,” words that have something to teach us about following in the way of Jesus.

<b>September 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>@ 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Pastor Brandon, preacher &amp; communion</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>@ 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Pastor Brandon, preacher</b>
	<b>11:15 AM</b>	<b>WATER GAMES w/ Pastor Brandon</b> <i>for children and the young at heart – playground courtyard area</i>
<b>17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>@ 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Pastor Brandon, preacher</b>
	<b>11:15 AM</b>	<b>“Town Hall” Q &amp; R in the sanctuary</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>@ 10:00 AM</b>	<b>Pastor Brandon, preacher</b>

## **Further Down the Pathway: “Threshold Conversations”**

### **September 2022**

Recently, I took some time to read through every comment recorded from the 2014 “Pathways” interviews. Yep, evvvveerry recorded comment. I remember when I first arrived to be your pastor in July 2016. An enormous energy of expectation was generated by the process, but, even with the collection of ideas from those Pathway interviews and even with some values clarification identifying DUMC’s DNA, the direction forward seemed unclear; a collective vision had yet to materialize.

Those who took part responded to four questions about church experiences that participants found most meaningful and what did they feel would bring the church to a flourishing future. From my read of your comments, there have been pivotal spiritual experiences – Contract Groups, Emmaus Retreats, Companions in Christ, Disciple Bible Study – and many of you belong to ongoing small groups– Bible Study groups, Men’s Fellowship Breakfast, the UMW, Emmaus groups, the Progressive Christians group, and Choir - that have forged strong bonds between you. Signature ministries mark the commitments some of you have made including Grace Garden, Almost-Like-Mom’s Cookies, the interfaith Celebration of Abraham, and our recent revisit to our ongoing identity as a Reconciling Congregation, especially needed in our current political milieu. How wonderful that these potent ministries have extended their benefits to the larger Davis community! Our witnesses of faith and social justice action are evidence of God’s love at work among us.

Yet, before and since our COVID isolation, I’ve heard other voices offering ideas for housing facilities on our church grounds, an expanded Grace Garden operation, and a more generalized sense of our families with younger children wanting to engage together in some, as yet undefined, social justice project.

We have a sense of belonging in the church, but I believe we can give voice to our collective yearnings as the church if we periodically and regularly spend time in the same space “pondering”, “weighing”, “wondering”, and holding “threshold conversations.” Yes, you’ve provided quite an archive of responses to the Pathways questions, but you’ve not heard in a collective gathering the tone of voice, the emotional resonance, the hurt, the fear, the longing in the voice of others as they share the prayer of their heart for their family, the children, their friends, for those on the fringes of our society. Our Quaker siblings call this kind of sharing a method for reaching a “Sense of Meeting.” Far beyond taking a vote under the guidance of “Robert’s Rules of Order” and even beyond reaching an acceptable “consensus”, there is the “sense of meeting” - the “Ah” or even the “Ah-ha!” – that signals some broader presence of blessing for all that the gathering has considered. I’m convinced that gatherings of this sort will provide much that we might be missing from our experience of “church”. And it’s a gift that does require spending time together regularly; there’s simply no shortcut for it.

So, until we set times for these “threshold conversations” let me suggest you read the following pamphlet called “Beyond Consensus”, published by Pendle Hill, a Quaker publishing company (see the links below). This little booklet provides the clearest examples of the process and possible results for the kind of “threshold conversations” I hope we can have in the coming months. Give it a read and stay tuned for the dates of our conversations.

We’ll need one another to discover the emerging reality that holds some hope for a future that satisfies the yearning of our hearts and meets the needs of our world; the place where God is waiting to greet us!

***Beyond Consensus: Salvaging Sense of the Meeting*** by Barry Morley

<https://pendlehill.org/product/beyond-consensus-salvaging-sense-meeting/>

[https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Consensus-Salvaging-Meeting-Pamphlets-](https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Consensus-Salvaging-Meeting-Pamphlets-ebook/dp/B00WRFRH1G/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1656543457&sr=8-1)

[ebook/dp/B00WRFRH1G/ref=tmm\\_kin\\_swatch\\_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1656543457&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Consensus-Salvaging-Meeting-Pamphlets-ebook/dp/B00WRFRH1G/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=1656543457&sr=8-1)

## United Methodist Church NEWS

**Great TED Talk on Racism! Please watch.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIZDtqWX6Fk>

**This article focuses on matters relating to theology, pensions, and benefits.**

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-is-the-umc-really-part-1>

**This article focuses on matters relating to human sexuality.**

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-is-the-umc-really-part-2?fbclid=IwAR3DUFXYOy6T-L-ncsUb674q8cXS8uJJQpHvIZIQ5HWbyTQ52uvDa8PCGbc>

**Church Disaffiliations**

[https://www.umnews.org/en/news/conferences-diverge-in-handling-church-exits?fbclid=IwAR3dbVU15TxeGkJcq4mF8ewsZhrLn9it1S1\\_iM7UzGwB06Z4CyyHAxc2YfU](https://www.umnews.org/en/news/conferences-diverge-in-handling-church-exits?fbclid=IwAR3dbVU15TxeGkJcq4mF8ewsZhrLn9it1S1_iM7UzGwB06Z4CyyHAxc2YfU)

**What Happened to the “Protocol”?**

<https://religionnews.com/2022/06/29/what-happened-to-united-methodists-proposal-to-split-the-denomination/>

**Reconciling Ministry Updates**

<https://rmnetwork.org/worth-fighting-for-research-findings-on-affirming-united-methodists-decision-to-stay-or-leave/>

**“The Circuit” - JJ Warren Newsletter**

<https://mailchi.mp/378931bdd53a/the-circuit-happy-june-16522119?e=077f6f8684>

**Videos from our recent 174<sup>th</sup> California-Nevada Annual Conference Session**

<https://www.cnumc.org/eventdetail/13134569>

**Bishop Dyck’s Letter on Roe v. Wade**

<https://www.cnumc.org/newsdetails/interim-bishop-sally-dyck-statement-on-the-supreme-court-s-decision-to-overturn-roe-v-wade-16542557>

## GROWING IN FAITH – FALL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Select the course that you feel would be both challenging but satisfying, intellectually and spiritually. Those courses that receive the most response will be offered, most beginning in September. Please do not let cost prevent you from attending; there is also an option to pay-as-you-participate. If you have questions, please email me here: [RevBOffice@gmail.com](mailto:RevBOffice@gmail.com). *Please place your “Sign Up Sheet” in the box labeled “Fall Course – Sign Up Sheets” in the sanctuary entry way, email them to Pastor Brandon, or give them to him after worship by September 4<sup>th</sup>.* Here’s to growing in faith – *Pastor Brandon*

### **Level 101: “The Bible Year” by Magrey DeVega**

**Description:** reading through the entire Bible

[https://www.amazon.com/Bible-Year-Devotional-Magrey-DeVega/dp/179102341X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=5QLXVSBO6436&keywords=the+bible+year+magrey+devega&qid=1657655674&srefix=the+Bible+year%2Caps%2C172&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Bible-Year-Devotional-Magrey-DeVega/dp/179102341X/ref=sr_1_1?crd=5QLXVSBO6436&keywords=the+bible+year+magrey+devega&qid=1657655674&srefix=the+Bible+year%2Caps%2C172&sr=8-1)

Meets weekly in 60 minutes sessions for the full year – drop in and out as your schedule allows.

**Cost:** \$24.00 [less costly options available online for Kindle users and used books]

### **Level 101: “Disciple Bible Study” by Various Scholars**

**Description:** A Bible survey of the Old and New Testaments that involves scholarly introductions to each topic

[https://www.amazon.com/Disciple-Becoming-Disciples-Through-manual/dp/0687783496/ref=tmm\\_pap\\_swatch\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&qid=1657656102&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Disciple-Becoming-Disciples-Through-manual/dp/0687783496/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1657656102&sr=8-1)

Meets weekly in 90 minutes sessions for 34 weeks – two absences each Fall/Spring semester are acceptable.

**Cost:** \$24.00 [less costly options available online]

### **Level 201: “Convictions” by Marcus Borg**

**Description:** exploring and discovering the “faith” mindsets that have framed Christian belief systems.

[https://www.amazon.com/Convictions-Learned-What-Matters-Most/dp/0062269984/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=2EDDLI7PE2XRO&keywords=Convictions&qid=1657656887&srefix=convictions%2Caps%2C258&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Convictions-Learned-What-Matters-Most/dp/0062269984/ref=sr_1_1?crd=2EDDLI7PE2XRO&keywords=Convictions&qid=1657656887&srefix=convictions%2Caps%2C258&sr=8-1)

Meets weekly in 90-minute sessions for 12 weeks – one or two absences is acceptable.

**Cost:** \$18 [less costly options available online]

### **Level 201: “Speaking Christian” by Marcus Borg**

**Description:** recovering the authentic contexts of words often misused by Christians and those who are critical of them.

[https://www.amazon.com/Speaking-Christian-Marcus-J-Borg-audiobook/dp/B005745G7G/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=N54XMZDDDBI4&keywords=speaking+christian+by+marcus+borg&qid=1657657038&srefix=speaking+christian%2Caps%2C242&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Speaking-Christian-Marcus-J-Borg-audiobook/dp/B005745G7G/ref=sr_1_1?crd=N54XMZDDDBI4&keywords=speaking+christian+by+marcus+borg&qid=1657657038&srefix=speaking+christian%2Caps%2C242&sr=8-1)

Meets weekly in 60-minute sessions for 24 weeks – drop in and out as your schedule allows.

**Cost:** \$12 [less costly options available online]

### **Level 201: “Do I Stay Christian?” by Brian McLaren**

**Description:** poses the questions everyone is asking about the church and Christianity and offers some responses to all of them.

[https://www.amazon.com/Do-Stay-Christian-Disappointed-Disillusioned/dp/B09GH1CJFT/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=UHZKE0GOQTER&keywords=do+i+stay+christian&qid=1657657144&s=audible&srefix=do+i+stay+%2Caudible%2C2130&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Do-Stay-Christian-Disappointed-Disillusioned/dp/B09GH1CJFT/ref=sr_1_1?crd=UHZKE0GOQTER&keywords=do+i+stay+christian&qid=1657657144&s=audible&srefix=do+i+stay+%2Caudible%2C2130&sr=1-1)

Meets weekly in 60-minute sessions for 27 weeks – drop in and out as your schedule allows.

**Cost:** \$28 [less costly options available online]

### **Level 101: “From Beginning to End: Rituals of Our Lives” by Robert Fulghum**

**Description:** Moving reflections on the passages of life that include personal, Biblical, and Interfaith references.

[https://www.amazon.com/Beginning-End-Rituals-Our-Lives/dp/0804111146/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=2O2OTA97KKJ8R&keywords=From+beginning+to+end+rituals+of+our+lives&qid=1657657226&s=audible&srefix=from+beginning+to+end+rituals+of+our+lives%2Caudible%2C172&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Beginning-End-Rituals-Our-Lives/dp/0804111146/ref=sr_1_1?crd=2O2OTA97KKJ8R&keywords=From+beginning+to+end+rituals+of+our+lives&qid=1657657226&s=audible&srefix=from+beginning+to+end+rituals+of+our+lives%2Caudible%2C172&sr=1-1)

Meets weekly or bi-weekly in 90-minute sessions for 10 months – one or two absences is acceptable.

**Cost:** \$10 [less costly options available online]

**Level 101: “Listening for God – Vol. 1” – *Various Authors*** (includes DVD recordings of author interviews)

**Description:** Uses excerpts from the writings of well-known authors as a path into spiritual reflection.

[https://www.amazon.com/Listening-God-Vol-Contemporary-Literature/dp/0806627158/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=23C63ONTH729R&keywords=listening+for+god+edited+by+paula+carlson&qid=1657657354&prefix=Listening+for+God+%2Caps%2C125&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Listening-God-Vol-Contemporary-Literature/dp/0806627158/ref=sr_1_1?crid=23C63ONTH729R&keywords=listening+for+god+edited+by+paula+carlson&qid=1657657354&prefix=Listening+for+God+%2Caps%2C125&sr=8-1)

[https://www.amazon.com/Listening-God-Vol-Contemporary-Literature/dp/0806627158/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=23C63ONTH729R&keywords=listening+for+god+edited+by+paula+carlson&qid=1657657354&prefix=Listening+for+God+%2Caps%2C125&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Listening-God-Vol-Contemporary-Literature/dp/0806627158/ref=sr_1_1?crid=23C63ONTH729R&keywords=listening+for+god+edited+by+paula+carlson&qid=1657657354&prefix=Listening+for+God+%2Caps%2C125&sr=8-1)

Meets weekly in 60-minute sessions for 8 weeks – drop in and out as your schedule allows.

**Cost:** \$12 [less costly options available online]

**Level 101: Labyrinth Walks**

**Description:** Engaging God’s presence through walking an ancient walking contemplative prayer form on the church grounds and possibly visiting other labyrinths in our area and in the Bay area.

In person only

Meets monthly in 90-minute sessions for 12 months – drop in and out as your schedule allows.

**Cost:** Donation [any amount]

**Finally**, if you do not see a course that you would like to see, please let me know. Even better, if there is a course you would like to offer or if you would like to assist leading one of the courses above, please let me know that as well. Some of you are already offering Bible studies, which is wonderful. So, let’s keep the learning and living of our faith front and center as we embrace God’s future for us! - *Pastor Brandon*

# FALL COURSES – SIGN UP SHEET

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Print this form. Make your selections. Submit your form via email or in worship.

**COURSE SELECTION** - check the box for ALL courses listed in which you have an interest.

- Level 101: “The Bible Year” by *Magrey DeVega*
- Level 101: “Disciple Bible Study” by *Various Scholars*
- Level 201: “Convictions” by *Marcus Borg*
- Level 201: “Speaking Christian” by *Marcus Borg*
- Level 201: “Do I Stay Christian?” by *Brian McLaren*
- Level 101: “From Beginning to End: Rituals of Our Lives” by *Robert Fulghum*
- Level 101: “Listening for God – Vol. 1” – *Various Authors* (includes DVD author interviews)
- Level 101: Labyrinth Walks

**AVAILABILITY** -- Please circle ALL of the times that work for your schedule.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
	AM	AM	AM
	10	10	10
	11	11	11
PM	PM	PM	PM
5			
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	

**ACCESS** – Circle your preferred method for attending the course.

IN PERSON

ZOOM

**COURSE MATERIAL** – Check one of the options below for course material.

*Please do not purchase your materials until the course offering is confirmed.*

- I’ll Purchase My Own Book
- Please Purchase A Book for Me

**NAME:**

**DATE:**

**EMAIL:**

**PHONE:**