

Monthly publication
United Church of Santa Fe
Santa Fe, New Mexico

April 2026

PRAYERS FOR A SEASON OF NEW LIFE

On top of Black Mesa there are flowers
On top of Black Mesa there are flowers
dew on yellow flowers
mountain flowers I see
so far away that it makes me cry.

She opened her eyes slowly,
as if to awaken from a trance
cast by a song,
transporting her in childhood,

Back to the flowers
growing atop Black Mesa,
so far and yet
clearly brilliant.

Awake from the song,
Gia focused on her daughter,
anxiously awaiting
to be taught a new song.

The old woman chose to take her time.
she had learned from experience,
attention is better paid by children,
when there is a little pause,
and mystery
in storytelling.

- *Nora Naranjo Morse (Santa Clara Pueblo)*

God of ceaseless new beginnings,
we rejoice that through your powerful love
Jesus Christ is risen from the dead . . .
In the Resurrection you were victorious
over sin, violence, and oppression.
Free us to risk ourselves in the struggle for justice and peace
that we may be your partners
in restoring all creation to your intention. Amen.

- *The United Church of Christ "Book of Worship"*

I pray that the world's leaders pay heed to the need of the hour
and value, above all else, their obligation to ensure the peace and
stability of the world. May Allah the Almighty protect all innocent
and defenseless people and may true and lasting peace in the
world prevail.

- *Imam Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad*

An Easter Prayer for Children

God of ceaseless new beginnings,
fill your child (name) with your new life.
this day and every day. Amen.



**UNITED CHURCH
OF SANTA FE
A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**Covenant of
The United Church of Santa Fe**

In the Lord's name we gather together here in Santa Fe
to worship and grow in the Christian tradition,
to minister in love to all persons,
to strive for justice and peace,
to respond to God's word.

We celebrate the heritage of Santa Fe and give ourselves to its challenges and opportunities.

We endeavor to live in harmony with all creation as stewards of the earth.

We share in the life and mission of the United Church of Christ and of Christians everywhere.

To these purposes we unite and covenant with God and one another, watchful for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor's Message

Dear Friends,

Easter is a lot of work.

I don't just mean the additional study groups and midweek communions throughout Lent or preparation for the extra services of Holy Week. All that is definitely additional work for the Sacred Space Team, Choir and music staff, Children's and Youth leaders, Hospitality Ministers, Social Media gurus, Property, Maintenance, and Landscape volunteers, Parish Life planners, and administrative staff. Even the Congregational Care Team gets involved, delivering Easter flowers to those who are homebound. Extra donations for those flowers and special offerings like One Great Hour of Sharing mean extra time for volunteer accountant Sarah Sawtell. Holy Week's special ads are dependent upon volunteer Russ Rountree.

To be sure, it takes a congregation to pull off Easter.

But Easter is a lot of work for other reasons, too. Living into new life is just plain hard. Ask anyone who's undertaken a new job or committed to a new skill, be it basketball or a musical instrument. Better yet, ask a sleep-deprived new parent or someone whose child has hit adolescence. New life can be exhausting and uncertain. Even if the good old ways don't work anymore, at least we know what to expect.

That first Easter, the people who followed Jesus definitely knew the challenges of new life. All four Gospels tell of their confusion and resistance. In Mark, the earliest book, the women run away from the empty tomb in fear, telling no one what they witnessed. In John's Gospel, Mary of Magdala mistakes the risen Christ for the gardener, Thomas demands first-hand proof of Christ's wounds, and Peter leads the other disciples back to their boats, being the fishermen they'd been before they ever met Jesus.

Luke tells of two disciples skedaddling away from Jerusalem on Easter afternoon, trying to clear their heads. When someone joins them, they think he's just a clueless stranger. Matthew ends his gospel with the disciples seeing the Risen Christ on a mountaintop and worshipping him, but Matthew adds, "some doubted."

Living into new life isn't easy, not then, not now. It takes work, and it takes letting go. Years ago, when a relationship kept heading south and I kept trying to keep it going, a good friend told me, "Quit doing CPR, Talitha. You of all people should know there's a difference between resuscitation and resurrection."

There's also a difference between resurrection and resistance. New life demands a new vision—and a new commitment to living into that vision. It means restoring our trust in God's way of life and renewing our vow to follow Jesus' ways of compassion and care, abundance and healing.

The work of this Easter may be harder than we've ever known, given all that is going on in our nation and our world. It's good thing, therefore, that the season of Eastertide lasts for 50 days—all the way to the end of May. That gives us lots of time to, in the words of poet Wendell Berry, "practice resurrection"—for ourselves and for this world.

Blessings,



Worship in April

LENT



Palm Sunday | “What Can We Do?” | March 29

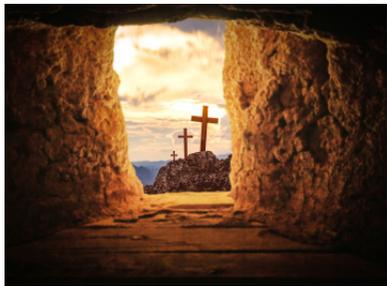
The crowd went wild, singing “Hosanna” and waving branches. But others feared this new leader. By the end of the week, their fear turned to anger and hate. We start that hard journey.

Maundy Thursday | April 2 (7:00 pm)

On the last night, Jesus washed his disciples’ feet, even Judas’ and Peter’s. Through the next day, he continued to show the extent of his love. We follow that love as we go deeper into Jesus’ Passion until we, like the disciples, scatter into the shadows.

Good Friday | April 3 | Creation Care – 9:00 to 11:30 am | Worship – 12:00 pm

We gather in the shadow of violence and injustice—in Jesus’ time and in ours—to pray for ourselves and for all God’s whole world. We pray, too, for the strength to love this world as God so loves. The Sanctuary is also open until 3:00 pm for private prayer.



Easter Sunday | “New Life is Hard Work!”

6:30 am Outdoor Sunrise Communion

10:00 am All Age Celebration

After Joseph and Nicodemus entombed Jesus’ dead body, the Empire’s soldiers rolled a stone in the entrance so no one could “steal” it. But no empire and no rock could keep God’s new life from bursting forth. “The angel rolled the stone away!” Who have been those angels in our lives? And what do we need to be “stone-rollers” in our time? Sometimes Easter is hard work!

EASTERTIDE



Signs of the Resurrection | April 12

On the first Easter, Mary of Magdala told the disciples she’d seen the Risen Christ. A few days later, when they gathered behind locked doors, Christ appeared, saying “Peace be with you.” But Thomas, who wasn’t there, wanted first-hand proof, ie., to touch his hand and his side. When he does, he exclaims, “My Lord and my God.” (John 20:19-31) The blessing of peace, the touch of a wound, seeing life after a death—what are the signs of resurrection that we have seen?

Open Eyes | April 19

On Easter evening, two disciples walk away from Jerusalem when a stranger joins them. He seems clueless about why they’re on the road since the great festival is still happening in the big city. But when they invite him to eat with them, he breaks bread for them—and “their eyes were open and they recognized him.” (Luke 24:13-35) What would it take for our eyes to be opened to new life or even just to a stranger?



A Life-Giving Shepherd | April 26

The 4th Sunday of Eastertide is often known as the “Good Shepherd Sunday,” filled with images of the leader who guides and cares for the flock, seeking out the lost, even giving their life for the sheep. (Psalm 23; John 10:1-11). It’s a good day to consider who are the “good shepherds” of our time. What kind of shepherds do we need?

Music

Michelle Schumann, Director of Music / Pianist

Happy Spring, music lovers at United!

The Sanctuary Choir is preparing for an inspiring Holy Week and Easter Sunday, and we can't wait to share it with you. The 7:00 pm Maundy Thursday (April 2) includes Mozart's exquisite *Ave Verum Corpus*. In the Good Friday Noon service, Javier Ortiz offers a stirring rendition of *Were You There?*

The 10:00 Easter Sunday service includes trumpeter Tyler Fries, along with the Sanctuary Choir's offering of "The Angel Rolled the Stone" and our annual congregational singing of the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's Messiah. It'll be a celebratory service, indeed... and you are very welcome to sing along through it all!

The Sunday after Easter, we continue the celebration by featuring some of United's wonderful youth musicians, including Sasha and Jack Smucker on violin and cello (joined by me, on piano). It'll be a glorious month in the musical life of the church, and we look forward to sharing it all with you!

Musically yours,
Michelle



'Love in Action Arts Camp' --

June 15-19 (9:00am – 3:00pm)

1st through 6th graders Sign up today—

Invite friends and grandkids!

Rooted in our core values—*Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Creation*—this camp offers a joyful, welcoming space where kids can learn, play, make friends, and explore big ideas in age-appropriate, hands-on ways. To register or for more info, please contact Family Minister Dana Bender (unitedchurch.dana@gmail.com; 505-988-3295).

Children & Youth

Dana Bender, Director of Family Ministry

Kids United!

Throughout Lent, ***Kids United*** have explored the stories about Jesus' ministry that the adults and youth are also exploring in worship. We've learned that Jesus traveled at great distances to heal the sick, teach the masses, and challenge the conventional wisdom of the time. Our goal has been to learn about the life of Jesus and the ways that he teaches and leads us every day. I am always amazed at the depth of understanding that can come out of young children!

Coming Up in April

Easter Morning, at 9:15 (before the 10:00 All-Age Easter Celebration), we'll have an Easter Egg hunt! Bring your baskets! Then for the following three April Sundays, we'll reflect on themes of hope--and we're hoping to spend more and more time outdoors as the weather warms up.

Update on Children's and Youth Outdoor Space

One of the things we're ***really hoping*** for in April is to finally have the building permit to start developing the new Children's and Youth Outdoor Space! Stay tuned!

Youth Prepare for New Stages of Their Life and Faith

Youth Confirmation/Initiates are wrapping up their formal classes on upcoming Sunday mornings. This journey began in the fall with a retreat at Glorieta, hours of discussions with one another and our mentors. Special thanks to Bruce Turnquist, John and Laura Johnson, Melanie Lohman, Sheree Whitney, and Judy Rainger for their thoughtful leadership during various classes throughout the year. The *Confirmation and Initiation to Adulthood* program culminates with the 10:00 service on **Sunday, May 10**. (This is a change from a previously posted date.)

Youth Reach Out to Help

On Saturday, April 25, Youth Confirmands/Initiates volunteer at the Food Depot from **1:00-3:00 p.m.**

Care and Concern

Prayer of Thanks for:

The Sacred Space Team (Dana Cagle, Dana Hollifield, Donna Clark, Christy Jones), **Music Staff** (Michelle Schumann, Andre Garcia-Nuthmann, Heather Casey, Javier Ortiz), and **Sanctuary Choir** for leading us visually and musically from Mardi Gras to Ash Wednesday, then all through Lent to the beauty of Easter!

Congratulations and Blessings for:

United's children and youth and the "Prayer Child Pray-ers" who have covenanted to pray for them daily.

Child/Youth	Pray-er	Child/Youth	Pray-er
Bonnie Bannerman	June Yoder	Weston Puglisi	Bruce Turnquist
Maggie Bannerman	Carol Ingells	Jaden Rand	John Fowler
Hazel Blankenship	Pam Hyde	Luke Rand	Larry Maldegen
Derek Darby	Sam Elkind	Ani Rode	Seana Flanagan
Bailey Gordon	Dana Bender	Ellie Rode	DiAna Gutierrez
Ophelia Grafe	Judy Rainger	Adyson Ross	Cathy Garrett
Rosalind Grafe	Alicia Wolfe	Meredith Ross	Laura Johnson
Tina Hubley	Leslie Cook	Jack Smucker	Tammie Ortega
Leo Joyce-Brown	Bob Ansheles	Sasha Smucker	Karen Wilbanks
Isaac Kalogerini-Larsen	Linda Eccard	Soren Zappe	John Johnson
Jaunito Muñoz	Dana Bender	Steven Zappe	Sheree Whitney
Althea Pak	Louise Cavatta	Jet Zinsser	Rachel Joyce
August Pak	Deborah Dungan		



Prayers of Healing and Hope for:

- The families and loved ones of **Geraldo Lucas Campos**, who died in Texas ICE custody due to “spontaneous use of force;” **Emmanuel Damas** of Haiti, who died in Arizona ICE custody due to an untreated tooth infection; and multiple other detainees who have died while in ICE detention facilities.
- **LeAnn Summers**, following the death of her father Roger; **Lee and Ron Evenson**, homebound due to health issues; **Jim Maloney (Debbie's husband)** under hospice care; **Maria Navarette**, with painful dental issues; **Janice Arlen**, healing from a cracked rib; **Donna Clark**, recovering from knee replacement; **Anne Siems**, foot surgery, and others.
- Persons dealing with cancer and those who love and care for them: **Susan Shaffer, Greg Gaertner, Diane Bethune's brother Jeffery**, and others. Persons with ongoing health issues: **Leonard Stovall, Mary Deane Lynn, Helen McCabe, Carol Ingells, Brooke Roberts, Cynde Christe**, and others.
- Persons in assisted living: **Sylvia Ortega, Jim Mills (Kingston); Ray & Nancy Lutz (Legacy); Ann Noss (El Castillo); Rev. Christine Vogel, Linda & Rev. Roger Knapp (Montecito); JoAnn Bolleter's mother.**
- Persons living with Parkinson's or other neurological conditions (**Msgr. Jerome Martinez**, and others);
- Individuals and families dealing with mental health and/or addiction issues. (If you or someone you love is struggling emotionally, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (988) provides 24/7, free, confidential support)
- Persons with families in other countries: **Blanca Surgeon (Honduras), Maria Navarette and Destiny Muñoz (El Salvador), Joohee Rand (Korea), John Walker (Scotland), Avril Ekstrand (Ireland), Kim Zeilik (son in Spain); Leslie Fagre and Eric Poppele (Jasper and family in England); the Darby Family (Makayla in Prague), Larry and Nyla Rasmussen (daughter-in-law's family in Colombia).**
- The people—especially immigrants and persons of color—of **Santa Fe, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Chicago, Portland (both Maine and Oregon), New Orleans, NYC, LA**, and other cities dealing with ICE occupations.
- Continued prayers for the people of **Iran, Gaza and the rest of the Middle East; Venezuela, Nigeria, Sudan, Ukraine, Central America**, and other places impacted by war; refugees who have fled their homes in war zones; people seeking asylum from violence; **policymakers** who determine their fate.
- Military people and law enforcement officers, including those in our congregation.
- Prayers of care and commitment for those with major **increases in health care costs or reduction of support from SNAP, USAID, Medicaid or Medicare**, or who are unhoused or are persons of color, LGBTQI+ or female.

Prayer Chain Keeps Others in Prayer

United has an email prayer chain of people who have offered to hold others in prayer, particularly in difficult times. If you would like to be part of it, please let us know. (unitedchurchsf@gmail.com)

Congregational Care for April:

On Call: John Shaffer: (814) 336-9353
Food: June Yoder (505) 503-0555

Outreach

LOVE GOD, NEIGHBOR, CREATION

Outreach Opportunities – Thank you!

Go online to unitedchurchofsantafe.org or send a check to 1804 Arroyo Chamiso, Santa Fe NM 87505.

Our Love Offering to the World One Great Hour of Sharing

United invites your support of One Great Hour of Sharing, the United Church of Christ offering to support refugee resettlement, disaster relief, food and small farm programs globally and in the U.S. Gifts can also be designated for particular emergencies (e.g., refugee relief, food, etc.). To donate online, go to unitedchurchofsantafe.org, memo: OGHS or bring your offering to church. Thank you!



Build a Bridge, Not a Wall Cards for Sale Benefit United's Support for Immigrants and Refugees

The Immigration and Refugee Task Force offers greeting cards of the beautiful "Mary of the Bridge" bulto created by Northern New Mexico artists Doreen Martinez and the late Ronald Martinez. A set of 10 cards costs \$15; 5 cards for \$8. Stop by the Community Room table to check them out—great for any occasion.



LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR

United's Shelter Supper Ministries

Provide supper for guests of St. Elizabeth and Casa Familia Family Shelter. Volunteer or donate financially (memo: shelter meals). Coordinators: Cathy Garrett and Sheree Whitney. Thank you!

- **Fri., Apr. 17 – Chop & Grate (9:30 am)** at United.
- **Fri., Apr. 17** – Deliver food to shelters (1:00 pm).
- Make meatloaf at home (12 loaves needed).



Supporting Our Diné/Navajo Brothers and Sisters

Your financial support for United's partner, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, in Fort Defiance, AZ underwrites basic supplies for families, Youth Traditional Garden, and Food Bank.

LOVE GOD, LOVE CREATION

Compost Collection – It's a Miracle!

Reunity Resources turns compostable products (food waste, meat scraps, etc.) into rich, life-giving compost. Pick up compostable bags at church (**NO** standard plastic bags, please), fill at home, bring back to put in green bin behind out the church. Thanks!

Care for Creation and Offset Your Carbon Use

Care for Creation and Offset Your Carbon Use
United's "Carbon Offset Program" helps plant trees and change policies to address climate change. Just track your car mileage and/or plane flight hours and donate through United to our partners SF Watershed Assoc. and NM Interfaith Power and Light. Info: unitedchurchofsantafe.org/creation-care.



Adult Faith Formation

ADULT FORUMS — Sundays at 11:15 am

April 5 — Easter Sunday

Extended Fellowship with Easter Cupcakes!

April 12—ICE's Impact on Santa Fe Kids

How has the presence of ICE in Santa Fe impacted families and especially school children? Are kids afraid to come to school? Are parents afraid to go buy groceries? What can the United Church do to help? We welcome Blanca Ortiz, who grew up in Santa Fe and is now a caseworker for Nava Elementary with Communities in Schools to share her experience and perspectives.

April 19 — TBR

April 26 & May 3—

The Climate: Social, Material, Moral-Spiritual (Larry Rasmussen)

More than the planet's material climate is changing. So, too, is the social and moral-spiritual context and climate. These two forums, led by Environmental Ethicist Larry Rasmussen, will address where we are and how we got here, as well as what our constructive responses might be.



GROUPS AND GATHERINGS

Wednesday Women's Study Group

April 1 and 15 — 10:00 to 11:30 am

Healer of the Water Monster and Whiskey Tender

Healer of the Water Monster, a young adult novel by Diné/Navajo author Brian Young, and *Whiskey Tender* by Yuma/Navajo author Deborah Jackson Taffa are the month's focus. All women welcome! (Cheryl Morton, mommorton@gmail.com; Jenn Wynne, home@wynnes.us).

Men's Study Group

What Are Biblical Values?

Wednesdays—April 8 and 22

10:30 am to 12:00 noon

Through spring, the Pretty Good Guys invites all men to join in a study of *What Are Biblical Values?* by Yale professor John Collins. Books for purchase in the Community Room.

Resiliency and Hope:

Unpacking the Gospel of John

Thursdays at 8:00 am — Zoom

John's Gospel is beautiful, confusing, challenging, troubling, and head-scratching. All welcome to join in this in-depth study (via Zoom). Please register at unitedchurchsf@gmail.com.



Announcements

Join Our Team! Choral Scholar Openings

United Church of Santa Fe Choral Scholar program has two professional, paid singing positions open for a Soprano or Alto and a Tenor. The program began several years ago to strengthen the Sanctuary Choir and provide professional opportunities primarily for students or young singers beginning their music careers. Choral Scholars sing with the Sanctuary Choir in Wednesday evening rehearsals and Sunday 10:00 services (Sept. to June). Also, yearly special services offer opportunities for solos. Required skills include substantial music literacy and the ability to lead sectionals. The choir is directed by Andre Garcia-Nuthmann. For info, please contact Director of Music, Michelle Schumann:

unitedchurch.michelle@gmail.com

Coming Soon! New Walking Group

If you are interested in getting outdoors and walking with a friendly bunch of people, we're offering an opportunity twice a month beginning in April. The first walk is Saturday, April 25th at 10:00 a.m. on the Rancho Viejo trails. This easy-to-moderate walk will be a maximum of two miles on paved trails. For more information, contact Barbara Christiano at Figaro@wvct.com or 802-793-3424 or contact Diane Darby at ddarbysf@gmail.com or 816-260-0127.



THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Mailing Date - March 23, 2026

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WELCOME TO THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

The United Church of Santa Fe invites you to join us as we grow in faith and hope. We are a part of the United Church of Christ, a progressive and inclusive Christian tradition that emphasizes freedom of thought and belief as well as a commitment to “Love God, Neighbor, and Creation.” As Christians, we are many individual members, each with different gifts to offer and contributions to make. We are also one body in Christ, members of one another.

As an expression of the practice and conviction of this congregation, we declare ourselves to be an “open and affirming church,” welcoming people who share a faith journey with Christ and who share with us the covenant that binds us together regardless of age, gender, race and ethnic background, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation. We welcome you!

IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM WORSHIP SERVICES OFFERED

United Church is also United (in-person and online) Church! We offer the **10:00 am Sunday service in-person and also livestreamed online** (access it on United’s website: unitedchurchofsantafe.org).

We also offer an 8:30 am Contemplative Communion Service. For indoor events, N95 masks are recommended. For more information about United’s programs, please call 505-988-3295, send an email to unitedchurchsf@gmail.com, go to our website. Thank you!