

Welcome to Watsonville First United Methodist Church

Open Mind, Open Heart, Open Door

Back-to-School Sunday

Sunday, September 17, 2023, 10 am

Today's altar flowers are dedicated by Marieta Flores.

We welcome all visitors today! Thank you for being here and gracing us with your presence. Please fill out the "**Visitation Card**" found in the pew and either place it in the offering plate or deposit into the *Suggestion Box* back in the narthex.

Children are invited to enjoy the resources in the **Children Learning Center** located at the back of the sanctuary during worship. Children are welcome to check out books and activity items to take home by signing the simple "*Check-out Sheet*" on clipboard there.

Words of Meditation

Mark Twain said, "*Your two most important days are the day you were born and the day you find out why.*"

I would add the third most important day to the list, and that is the day **you take action on your why.**

~ Light Watkins

"We'd never know how high we are,
till we are called to rise;
and then,
if we are true to plan,
our statures touch the sky."

~ Emily Dickinson

"We are not alone in human struggle."

~ Alara Tiernan

*(*Please stand if you are able)*

Prelude

Rock of Ages

Marina Thomas

Bringing in the Light

Welcome & the Life of the Church

***Passing of Peace** (Wave to your neighbors near you with "**Peace of Christ be with you.**")

***Centering Breath**

***Call to Worship**

Leader: Lord, open our lips and we will proclaim your praise.

People: We arise today, through God's strength to power us:
 Leader: God's way to set us on the right path,
People: God's loving gaze to affirm us,
 Leader: God's ear to hear us,
People: God's wisdom to guide us,
 Leader: God's shield to protect us.
People: God's hand to lift us when we fall,
 Leader: God's grace to sustain us,
 All: **God's embrace to bring us joy. Amen.**

***Gathering Song** *Tell Me the Stories of Jesus* #277

Children's Time "What My Mother Taught Me About Education" Pastor John

***Gospel Reading** **Matthew 7:24-27**
House Built Upon a Rock

"²⁴ Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!"

John 15: 4-11
I am the vine; you are the branches

"⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

Philippians 4:13
 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Special Music *Die Nachtigall* (The Nightingale) Dr. Emily Sinclair
 by Alban Berg

Message "Stay Connected" Rev. John Song

Hymn *Walking With Jesus*
 Words & Music by Robert G. Savage

Walking with Jesus, walking every day,
All along the way, for I am
Walking with Jesus, walking with Jesus today.

Walking in the sunlight, walking in the shadow,
Walking every day, all along the way, for I am
Walking in the sunlight, walking in the shadow,
Walking with Jesus today.

Walking with Jesus, walking every day,
All along the way, for I am
Walking with Jesus, walking with Jesus today.

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Leader: Let us respond to this word of grace and hope by the giving of our tithes and offerings, which support the varied ministries of the Watsonville First United Methodist Church, mission at home and throughout the world.

Offertory *We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace* Marina Thomas

***Doxology** Praise God, from whom all blessings flow #95

Presentation of Offering

***Offertory Prayer** (In unison)

God of all generations, as we worship today, we offer our whole selves to you, all that we have and all that we are. We pray that you will help us be bold in our mission and in our witness. We pray this in the name of our Savior and Redeemer, Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Recessional Song** *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* FWS #2158

***Benediction** [*This ends the Live Streaming]

Prayers of the People

- a. Sharing of Joys & Concerns (Please raise your hand & mic will be given to you)
- b. Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer/Padre Nuestro (You are invited to pray in the language of your choice)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Postlude *Let's Go Down to the River to Pray* Marina Thomas

*We warmly invite everyone to a delicious cup of Coffee,
refreshments and fellowship in the Social Hall following worship.*

Today's refreshments: Marjorie Martinez & Marieta Flores

*If you want to bring Refreshments in the future
you can sign up on the clipboard in the narthex or see Marjorie Martinez.

Worship Leaders

Pastor	Rev. John Song
Pianist	Marina Thomas
Soloist	Dr. Emily Sinclair
Choir Leader	Carmelita Abenoja
Liturgists	Febe Avitua, Tahja Martinez, Mark Sorensen
Greeters	Harry & Clarice Wiggins
Head Usher	Marieta Flores
Tech Team	Antonio Pantaleón, Lucila Pantaleón, Elizabeth Reitano
Nursery Attendants	Tatyana Martinez, Julissa Solis
Coffee Hour	Marjorie Martinez, Marieta Flores

Calendar for the Week

Sun., Sep. 17	10:00 am	Worship Service
	11:10 am	Coffee Hour, Social Hall
	11:45 am	J2Hope Foundation , St. Stephen's room
Mon., Sep. 18	1-3 pm	Sewing Group , St. Stephen's room
Sun., Sep. 24	10:00 am	Worship Service/ LEGO Sunday
		Guest Preacher: Dr. Haley Feuerbacher
	11:10 am	Coffee Hour, Social Hall

Opportunities

30 min Q&A on Sermon with the Pastor
(Every Sunday from 11:30 am – 12 noon, Social Hall table)

Crop Hunger Walk

Sat. Sep. 30, 8:30 am @ front of Watsonville First UMC
(Fundraiser for Second Harvest Food Bank)

Day Workshop on Forgiveness

By Dr. Peter Coster
Sat. Oct 7, 10 am – 3:30 pm, Social Hall
(Members: \$20, Students: FREE)

Mental Health Workshop: Trauma & Relationships

Dr. Hanna Song & Mayra Bernabe
Sat. Oct 21, 10 am – 12 pm, St Stephen's room
FREE: All are welcome!

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Baptism, Membership, Wedding, Funeral, and Pastoral Counseling are available