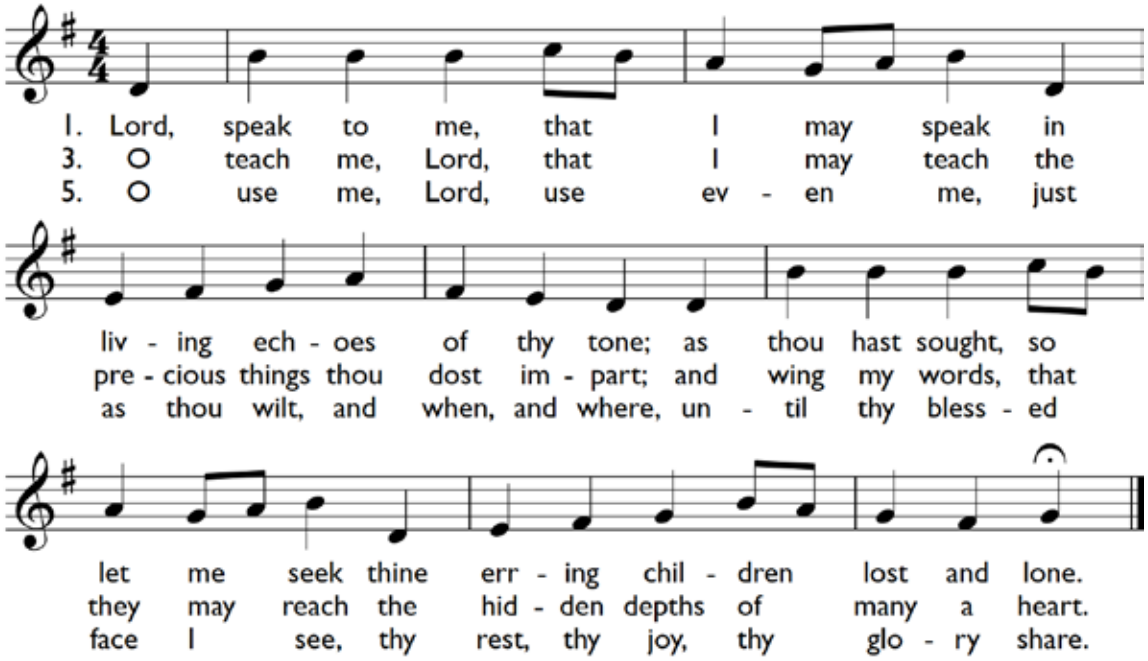
September 27, 2026 **18th Sunday after Pentecost**

PRELUDE ***Petit Prélude*** **Peter Fennema**
Joseph Jongen (1873-1953)

WELCOME **Molly Vetter**

May the peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

HYMN ***Lord, Speak to Me*** **United Methodist Hymnal**
Please stand as you are able. **No. 463**



WORDS: Frances R. Havergal, 1872 (Rom. 14:7)
MUSIC: Adapt. from Robert Schumann, 1839; CANONBURY
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MORNING PRAYER **Mary Garbesi**

Please be seated.

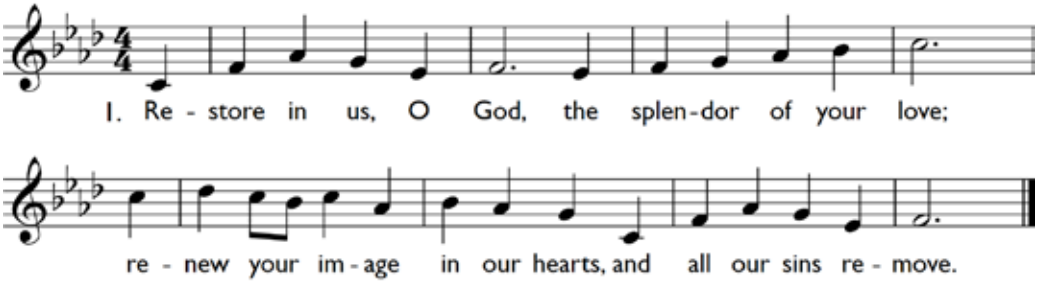
O God, we thank you for this earth, our home;
For the wide sky and the blessed sun,
For the salt sea and the running water,
For the everlasting hills
And the never-resting winds,
For trees and the common grass underfoot.
We thank you for our senses
By which we hear the songs of birds,
And see the splendor of the summer fields,
And taste of the autumn fruits.
Grant us a heart wide open to all this beauty;
And save our souls from being so blind
That we pass unseeing
When even the common thorn bush
Is aflame with your glory,
O God our creator,
Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

- Walter Rauschenbusch, adapted

CHILDREN'S TIME **Molly Vetter**

THE COMMUNITY **INTERACTS** WITH THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN ***Restore In Us, O God*** **Glory to God No. 434**



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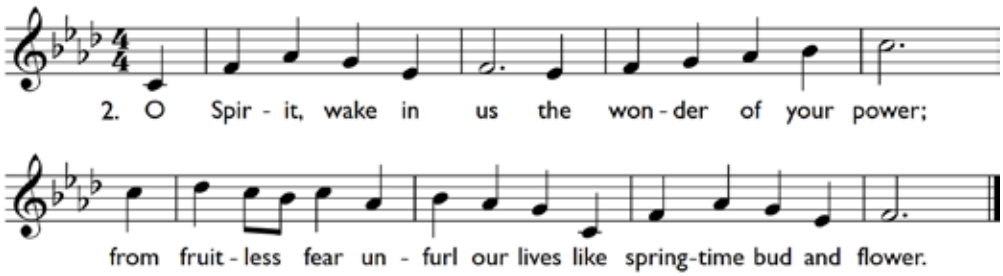
SCRIPTURE READING **Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16** **Nancy Price**

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching:
incline your ears to the words of my mouth!
I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,
things that we have heard and known,

that our forebears have told us.
We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, the might,
and wonders God has wrought.
The Lord wrought marvels in the sight of their forebears
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan,
the Lord divided the sea and let them pass through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap,
led them with a cloud in the daytime,
and all the night with a fiery light,
cleft rocks in the wilderness,
and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep,
made streams come out of the rock,
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN ***Restore In Us, O God*** **Glory to God No. 434**



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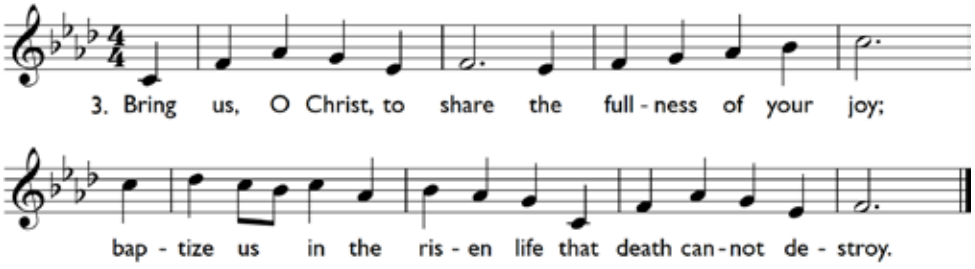
SCRIPTURE READING **John 7:37-39** **Molly Vetter**

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive, for as yet there was no Spirit because Jesus was not yet glorified.

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

HYMN ***Restore In Us, O God*** **Glory to God No. 434**



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SERMON ***Living Water: Becoming the River*** **Molly Vetter**

THE COMMUNITY **RESPONDS** TO THE WORD OF GOD

CALL TO PRAYER "Improvisation (Élévation)" from *Suite Médiéval* **Peter Fennema**
Jean Langlais (1907-1991)

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS AND THE WORLD **Tanya Sun**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS AND LIVES **Molly Vetter**

GIVING BACK TO GOD
We are thankful for all that God has blessed us with, and we consider financial giving an act of worship. We invite you to express your worship by becoming a faithful giver to support God's work through Westwood Church. To make a one-time or recurring donation, **use the QR code** or **visit www.Westwood UMC.org/Give**.

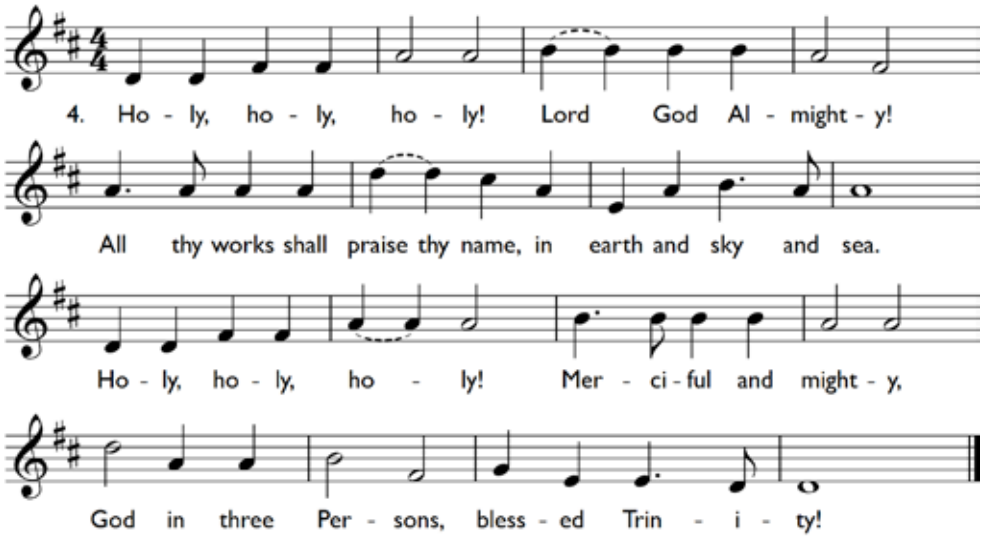
OFFERTORY ANTHEM ***Sweet Rivers*** **Sanctuary Singers**

William Moore (1790-1850), arr. Reginald Unterseher (b. 1956)

Sweet rivers of redeeming love
lie just before mine eyes.
Had I the pinions of a dove,
I'd to those rivers fly.
I'd rise superior to my pain,
With joy outstrip the wind.
I'd cross cold Jordan's stormy wave
and leave the world behind.

OFFERTORY RESPONSE ***Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty*** **UM Hymnal**

Please stand as you are able. **No. 64**



WORDS: Reginald Heber, 1826 (Rev. 4:8-11)
MUSIC: John B. Dykes, 1861; NICAEA
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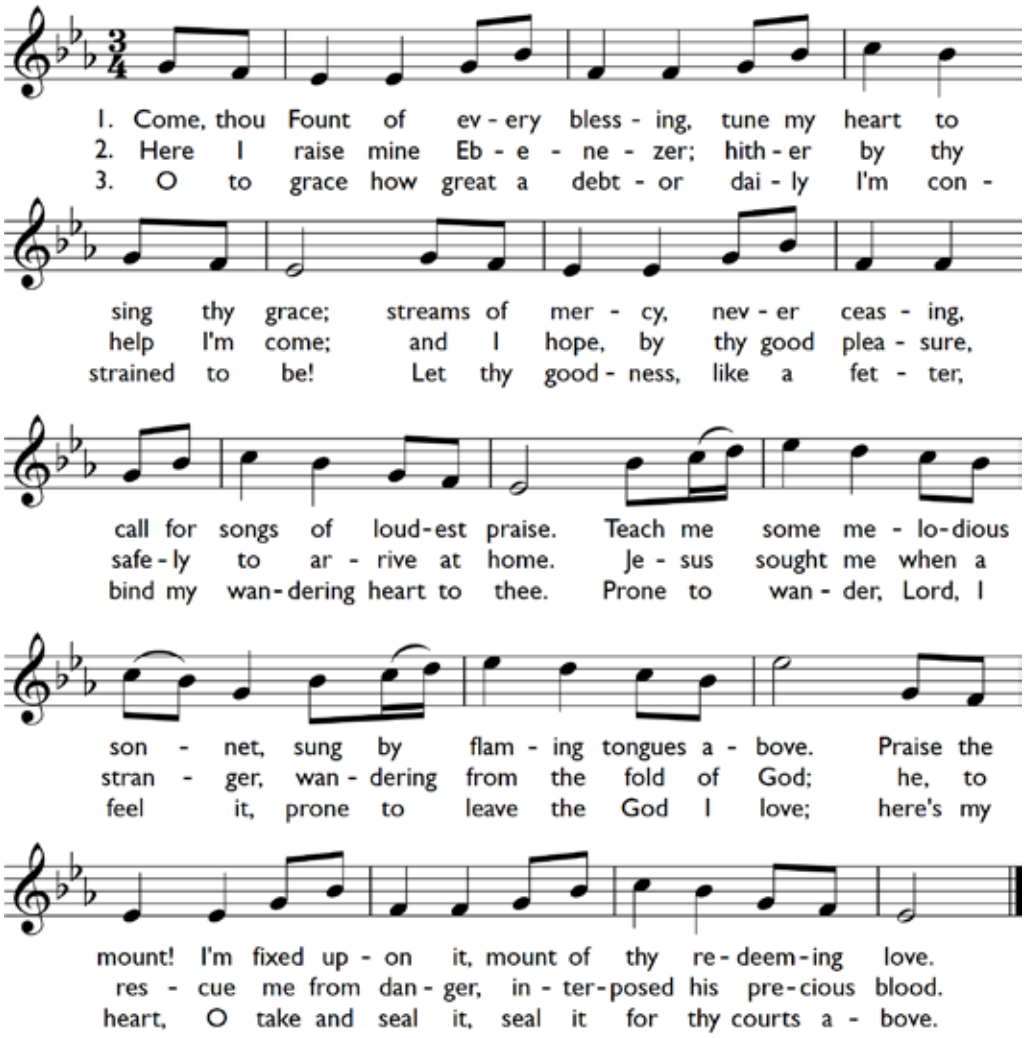
PRAYER OF DEDICATION **Molly Vetter**

THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH **GOES OUT TO SERVE**

HYMN ***Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*** **UM Hymnal No. 400**

Please remain standing as you are able.



Words: Robert Robinson, 1758
Music: NETTLETON, Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second*, 1813
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ANNOUNCEMENTS **Molly Vetter**

Please be seated.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE ***Choral*** **Peter Fennema**

Please remain seated. Joseph Jongen (1873-1953)

PARTICIPATING TODAY

Pastoral Staff
Rev. Molly Vetter, (she/her), Senior Pastor

Sanctuary Music Leadership
Dr. Andrew Schultz, *Director of Sanctuary Music*
Peter Fennema, *Organist*

Sanctuary Singers
Taylor Jacobs (he/him), *tenor*
Abram Poliakoff (he/him), *guest tenor*
Byron Jones (he/him), *bass*

Liturgists
Mary Garbesi
Nancy Price
Tanya Sun

Production Team
Leila Bishop (they/them), *sound*
Guillermo Gonzalez (he/him), *videography*
Eli Reynolds (he/him), *videography*

Flowers are on the Altar
Given today in celebration of the Pastor Molly (9/26) and Sabrina's (9/30) 50th Birthdays!

STAFF OUT TODAY

Trinity Del Regno, *soprano section leader*
Carmen Edano, *alto section leader*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The following people have requested prayer, or others have requested prayers for them:

Ongoing Prayer Request

- Cheryl Downey
- The Family of Beth Thomas
- Alana Miles & Family
- Janet Hoskins
- Kelly O'Brien
- Joy Bennett Koupal
- Gloria Forio
- Jerry Whittemore
- Diana Park
- Paul & Dorene Rutter
- Bukola Gbadamosi
- Judy Wessling
- Jage Schiff
- Maggie Fitzgerald
- Nancy Hill
- Pablo Jauregui
- Hapi Veikune & family
- Linda Dannison
- Coral Moore
- Eunice
- Jim Agee
- Patricia Barlow
- Bette Caldwell
- The people in the Middle East, Venezuela, Russia, Ukraine, Myanmar, and the Sudan.
- For our country as it continues to face challenges.

These requests are held in prayer by the pastoral staff and by the prayer chain. You are encouraged to join in praying for them by name.

To submit a prayer request, please go to www.westwoodumc.org/care.

WESTWOOD UMC MISSION STATEMENT

Westwood United Methodist Church is an intergenerational Christian community committed to radical inclusivity, justice, compassion, and growing Jesus' beloved community.

In worship and beyond, we invite you to connect with others in our community through our ministries, events, and groups. We are grateful to be a church that includes and celebrates people of all ages and races, abilities, gender identities and sexual orientations.

THE LOFT
"What Does It Mean to Love God?" - Rev. Dr. Christopher Carter
Today, September 27th (10:30am) Upstairs in The Loft
Both the writers of the Hebrew Bible and Jesus taught, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your mind, and with all your strength." Indeed, Jesus tells us that this is the greatest commandment. In the final sermon of our After Deconstruction series, we address the corollary question this commandment raises: what does it mean to love God? What does loving God look like in practice? How we practice loving God is how we practice Christianity. **Conversation Question:** What does it mean to love God? What does loving God look like for you? If your answer has shifted over time, what led to that shift?

WISDOM AT WESTOOD - "Reluctant Youth, Furious Prophet, Abused by YHWH, Filled with Hard-Headed Hope" - Rev. Dr. John Holbert
Today, September 27th (11am) Wesley Room and via Zoom
Jeremiah was a 7th-6th century BCE prophet, speaking mainly to Judah and Jerusalem. He is unique among the prophets in that he both calls his people to account for their breaking of the covenant of YHWH by refusing to aid the marginalized and by worshipping a series of false gods, while at the same time revealing the enormous pain and agony his prophetic call caused him, leading him even to accuse his God of terrible deeds against him personally.

50/50 BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR MOLLY & SABRINA
Today, September 27th (12noon) Church Courtyard
Our Office Supervisor Sabrina Simmons and our Senior Pastor Molly Vetter are both turning 50! They invite you to join them to celebrate both of their 50th Birthdays at a 50/50 party after church. They're not asking for gifts - just your presence. Join us for cake and snacks including 50/50 combos of some of our favorite things!

CONNECT WITH OUR MINISTRIES
Join a Small Group: We have neighborhood groups in Westwood and Culver City, and groups for Young Adults, Men, Queer Folks, and People of Color. Contact Westley Garcia at westley@theloft.org for details.

Join a Social Justice Group: Contact Everest at everest@westwoodumc.org to join our Social Justice Team, our Community Advocacy Team, or our Social Justice Movie Club.

Join Care Ministries: Contact Pastor Diana Holbert at diana@westwoodumc.org to connect with any of our care ministry teams, including meal trains, visitation volunteers, and more.

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PATH RETURNS!
First Thursday of the Month - October 1st (6pm)
PATH (2346 Cotner Ave. Los Angeles)
Westwood UMC will be cooking dinner at PATH's Cotner Avenue location on the first Thursday of each month starting on September 3rd. To sign up, scan the QR code and create an account on the new PATH Volunteer portal. The Westwood volunteer slot is available on the opportunities page under September 3rd. When you sign up on the portal, please also notify Everest Harvey at everest@westwoodumc.org. If you have any questions, contact Joy Hsu at joyhsu937@gmail.com.

MATT MILES - CELEBRATION OF LIFE
Sunday, October 4th (3pm) Westwood UMC Sanctuary
Matt Miles, former tenor soloist and section leader in Westwood's Chancel Choir for 8 years from 2010-2018, passed away suddenly Sept. 4, 2026. He is survived by his wife, Alana, and three children, Michael, Olivia, and Joshua. A memorial service in celebration of Matt's life has been planned for Sunday, Oct. 4th at 3pm in the Westwood UMC Sanctuary. A reception will follow upstairs in The Loft.

CONSTRUCTING THEOLOGY
4-Week Class Starting Sunday, October 18th (9:30-10:15am) Wesley Room
How do your beliefs shape the way you practice Christianity? In this four-week class led by Rev. Dr. Carter, participants will be invited to explore their beliefs about Scripture, God, Jesus, and salvation. Each week, we will cover a theological category by watching a sermon, engaging a short reading, and reflecting on journal questions to help you discover how your faith informs your practice.

WESTWOOD WOMEN'S POTLUCK LUNCH
Saturday, October 24th (11am) Helms Hall
Please join us for our Women's Group for our quarterly potluck. We will have a gathering and fellowship time for about 30 to 40 minutes and then enjoy lunch together. Bring a dish to share and invite a friend, all are welcome! RSVP to Sabrina Simmons at sabrina@westwoodumc.org.

FALL FESTIVAL

WESTWOOD UMC **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11**

SIGN UP TO BRING FOOD & VOLUNTEER.

JOIN US FOR WESTWOOD'S ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL on Sunday, October 11th!
The day starts with a full morning of worship and learning, with our regular Sunday schedule. Plus, Grapple Group will lead Fall Festival games and activities with Westwood Kids on the courtyard. At noon, things get even more festive.

12noon - CHILI COOK-OFF & DESSERT BAKE-OFF on the Courtyard
Join us for a beloved annual tradition: our all-church Fall Festival on the courtyard! Make a pot of chili, bake a favorite dessert, and come ready to enjoy the entries in our Chili Cook-off and Dessert Bake-off. Perhaps you can be the new Westwood Champion?

SCAN THE QR CODE (upper right) and let us know if you'll be bringing a pot of your homemade chili, a dessert, or BOTH if you're so inspired! Not into cooking or baking? You can volunteer to help organize the crockpots and baked goods as they're dropped off, decorate the courtyard, or clean up after the party!

"CLEAR THE ROAD TO FREEDOM" PILGRIMAGE
September 29th - October 6th
The Westwood Social Justice Team is helping to plan and coordinate a sacred journey from Adelanto ICE Detention Center to the Metropolitan Detention Center and Federal Building in Los Angeles to draw attention and cry out for immediate action to end the deplorable conditions and deaths at the detention centers throughout California and across the country. Participation of all kinds is encouraged, including walking on specific days, volunteering to support the walkers, and donating to the immigrant bond fund. To join the pilgrimage or volunteer, contact Everest Harvey at everest@westwoodumc.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIGILS FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

All are invited to as we come together alongside our Westside Mission Area friends and neighbors for three "Vigils for Justice and Peace" this Fall. Join us as we gather in prayer, witness, and hope for our communities and our world. Three opportunities to participate:

Sunday, Oct. 4th (4pm) - First UMC Santa Monica & Community Palisades UMC (Held at FUMC Santa Monica - 1008 11th St., Santa Monica)

Sunday, Nov. 1 (4pm) - Westwood UMC (10497 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles)

WESTWOOD KIDS - FALL 2026 - A DOZEN GREAT ADVENTURES

Sundays in the Fall (9:30am - 12noon)

Happy New Year - for school and new adventures, that is! For starters, we're going to open up stories of ancient days, particularly in the Old Testament. Starting with wondering more about God's great gifts, we will move on to The Great Flood. Our fall adventure will follow some of the earliest people and their close encounters with God. Then get ready for The Great Family - an amazing story that is full of wonder. All 12 (that's a "dozen") stories this fall will be GREAT! Time with our friends will also be GREAT! And some of our art responses will be GREAT to experience! We're calling this time: A Dozen Great Adventures! For more info, contact Deanne Edwards at deanne@westwoodumc.org.

SPONSOR SUNDAY ALTAR FLOWERS

Ever thought about sponsoring the flowers on the altar? It's a wonderful way to honor or remember a loved one, celebrate a special event or milestone, or just make the Sanctuary space more beautiful! Cost is $95. You can even partner with a friend, committee, or other church group to help defray the cost. For more info or to sign up for a specific Sunday, please contact Sabrina Simmons at sabrina@westwoodumc.org or 310.474.4511.

CARE NOTES AVAILABLE

In the passageway between the narthex and the courtyard our Care Ministry has set up a display of Care Notes. These are small booklets to help deal with crises in your lives, ranging from death of a pet or a loved one to dealing with stress. We even have some for children. Please take what you need.

WESTWOOD CHURCH

Rev. Molly Vetter.....*Senior Pastor*
Rev. Dr. Christopher Carter.....*Associate Pastor/Pastor of The Loft*
Rev. Dr. Diana Holbert.....*Minister of Care*
Dr. Deanna Edwards.....*Director of Children & Families*
Everest Harvey-Davis.....*Director of Youth & Social Justice Ministries*
Deaconess Jeanne Roe Smith.....*Campus Minister, Wesley Foundation Serving UCLA*
Dr. Andrew Schultz.....*Sanctuary Music Director*
Peter Fennema.....*Organist*
Trinity Del Regno, Carmen Edano, Taylor Jacobs, Byron Jones.....*Chancel Choir Section Leaders*
Sabrina Simmons.....*Office Manager*
Pablo Jauregui.....*Facilities Manager*
Gabrielle Grubbs.....*Loft Music and Worship Director*
Westley Garcia.....*Director of Loft Connections*
Uriya Harvey-Davis.....*Assistant Director of Children and Youth Ministries*
Isabel Kilroe.....*Director of Children's Arts*
Jaime Top.....*Facilities Assistant*
David Trotter.....*Communications*
Youth & Children's Ministry Staff: Beverly Bell, Lesley Castillo, Fozieh Karimi, Ashley Kishibay, and Emily Kishibay

West District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Siosaia Tu'itahi
California-Pacific Annual Conference Bishop: Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank

The Sanctuary – 9:30am
A sacred gathering with traditional liturgy, a thoughtful message, and resounding organ.

More info: www.WestwoodUMC.org

The Loft – 10:30am
An innovative gathering with spiritual conversation, creativity, coffee, and music.

More info: www.TheLoftLA.org

Westwood Kids
Westwood Church has a vibrant Sunday morning children's ministry. Integrating biblical stories, music, art, and play, we are exploring God's world using multiple teaching approaches. Join us in The Sanctuary at 9:30am, including a children's time, followed by our own morning together in our children's area until 12noon. Join our Westwood Kids email by contacting Deanna Edwards at deanna@westwoodumc.org.

Grapple Group
The Grapple Group provides a spiritual community for big questions for young people in grades 6-12. For more information, contact Everest Harvey, Director of Youth & Social Justice Ministries, at everest@westwoodumc.org.

Westwood Church
10497 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Office Hours
Tuesday - Friday
(9am - 1pm)

Contact Us
wumc@westwoodumc.org
310.474.4511