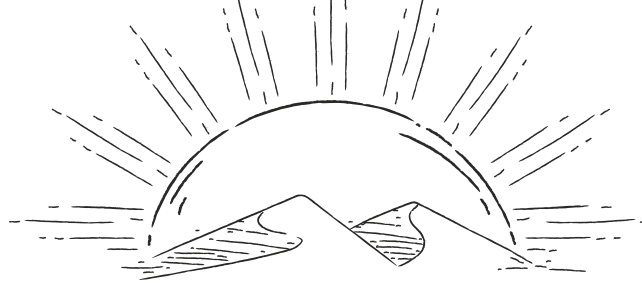


2026 SECTION J MEMORIALS

(1) Introductory Letter	J-2
(2) Deceased Bishops and Deceased Spouses	J-3
(3) Deceased Clergy	J-5
(4) Deceased Laity	J-23
(5) Deceased Life Companions	J-25



Dear Friends,

The 12th chapter of Hebrews mentions the “great cloud of witnesses surrounding us,” saying:

So then let’s also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let’s throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, and fix our eyes on Jesus, faith’s pioneer and perfecter.

Another way to think of this is that we are surrounded by the saints who have gone before us; that somehow, they still are present, though in a non-present way. Sometimes I think of life as something played on a football-type field, and the stands are filled with those we can’t see, those who have gone before us who are cheering us on and helping us to release the baggage that we are not meant to carry. Or maybe it’s like when we had to preach to an empty church during the pandemic. We were filmed but the seats were empty.

During that time, I would imagine people in the pews, mostly those who had already left this earth, responding and providing feedback to the words spoken to the air.

Your loved one has passed on over the river from this side of life to the eternal side of life. We don’t know what that feels like, but we hope that they are still connected somehow, and that they are having an experience of God that we can only wish for. Today we are honoring your beloved, your saint who was also a sinner, and your “cloud of witnesses.” I pray this time of remembering brings comfort, healing, and connection. And I pray that you feel the love of God in the words, the liturgy, and the songs.

I am praying for you.

Bishop Dotire Escobedo-Frank

Deceased Bishops
and
Deceased Spouses

2026 SECTION / MEMORIALS
Bishops

Bishop Benjamin Justo
3/27/2025

Bishop Hans Växby
3/30/2025

Bishop Richard Wilke
4/20/2025

Bishop Violet L. Fisher
11/17/2025

Bishop Jose Gamboa
12/22/2025

Spouses

Mitzi Dew
1/27/2025

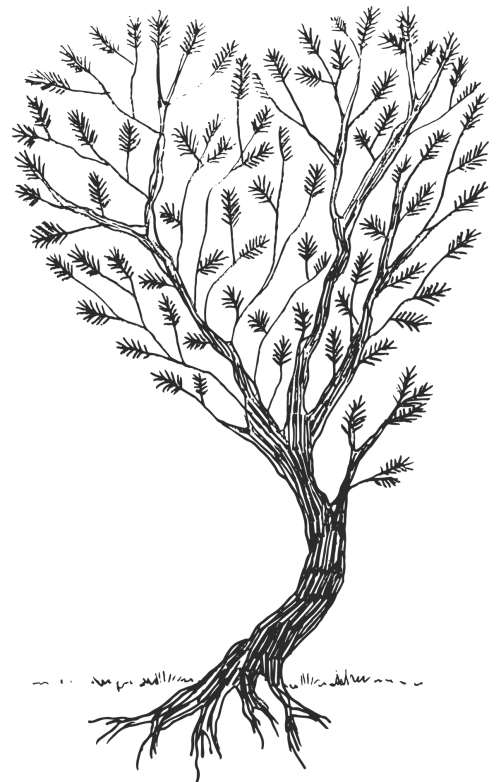
Mrs. Mary L. Grove
9/29/2025

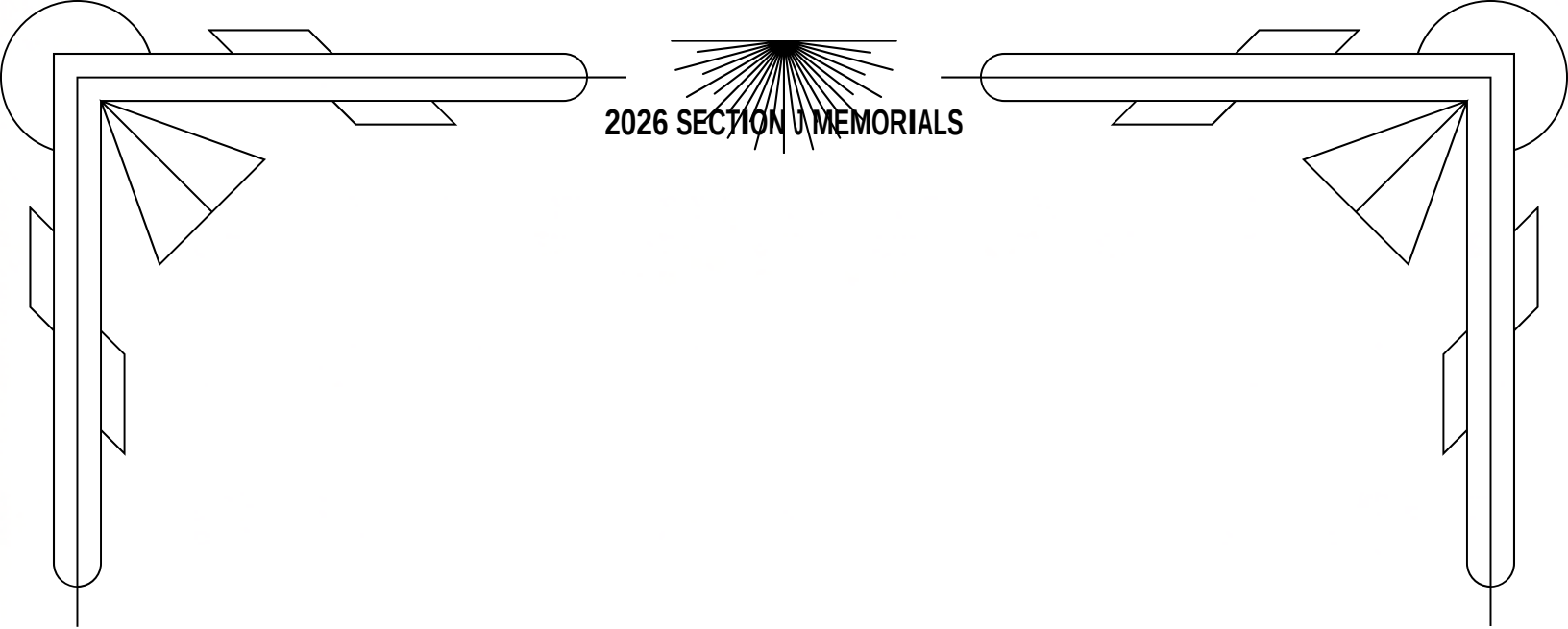
Rev. Dr. Blaine Rader
10/30/2025

Rev. Eugenio Tomas Mbulo
12/8/2025

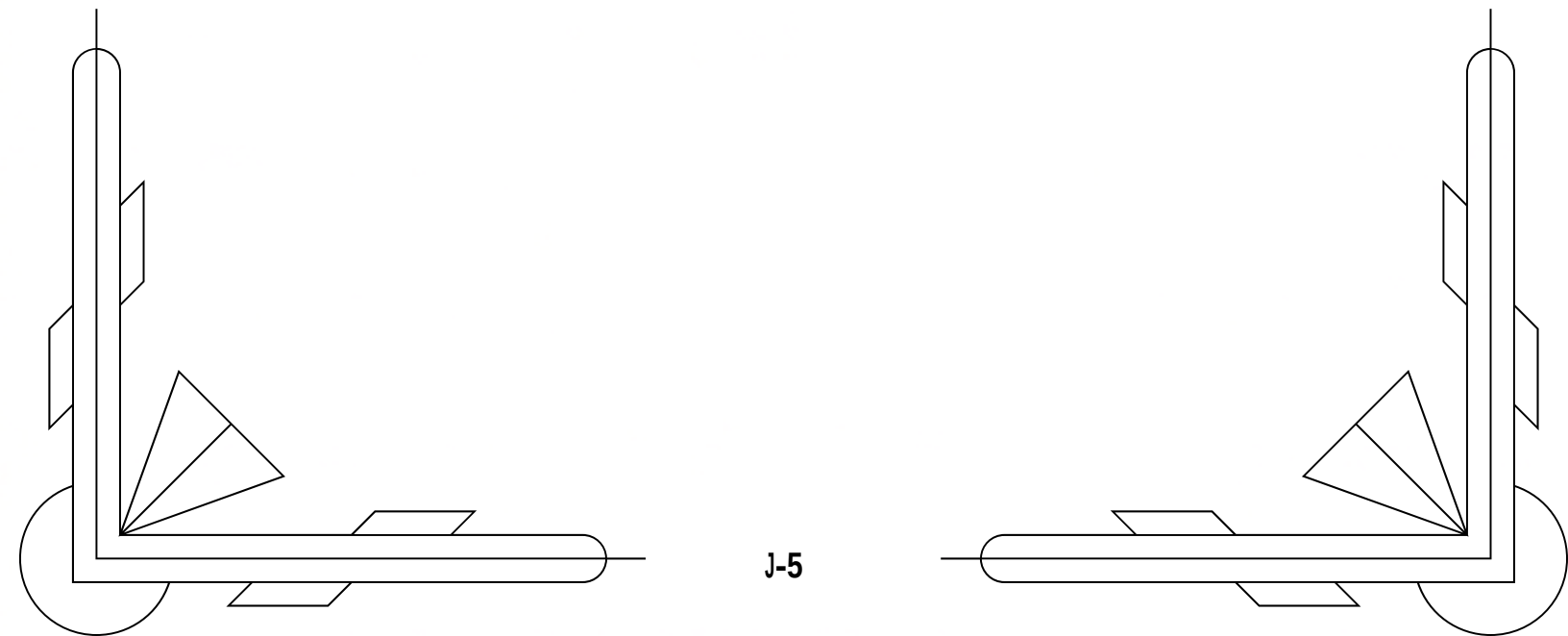
Mrs. Diane Sprague
2/22/2026

Mrs. Raquel Martinez
4/12/2026





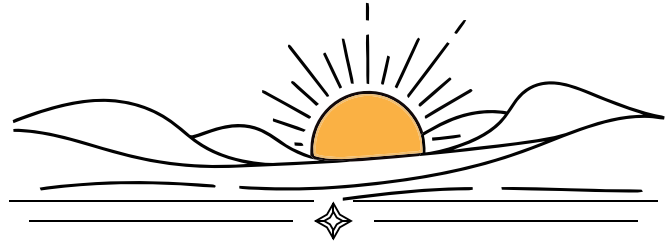
Clergy





George Cisneros Jr.

February 3, 1955 - March 3, 2026



CISNEROS JR, GEORGE (P.93; F.00) California-Pacific 1990 (Oct) FL; 90 (Oct) (El Getsemani UMC); 93 PM; 93 El Getsemani UMC; 95 (Jan) El Getsemani UMC (1/2); 95 La Plaza UMC; 97 La Plaza UMC & La Trinidad UMC, Co-Pastor; 98 La Plaza UMC; 2000 FE; 2000 La Plaza UMC; 2006 Sabbatical; 07 Sepulveda UMC; 09 Mission Community UMC; 10 (Aug 16) (J357) Incapacity Leave; 20 Retired

Rev. George Cisneros Jr. was born in Lima, Ohio, but he was raised in Durango, Mexico, until he was 18 years old, when he moved to El Paso, Texas, to study. After graduation, he moved back to Mexico, where he started his studies in odontology.

He was living in Mexico when he had a deep spiritual experience that brought him to Christ. He began to attend a Methodist Church, where he became a very active member while in charge of the youth group. While working in the church, he felt a desire to enter ministry. God had called him to ministry; there was no doubt. He moved to California to pursue his Master of Divinity at Fuller Theological Seminary. It was there that he met his wife, Myrian Monnet, who at that time was also a student.

He was ordained as an elder and was appointed to different churches. His passion for evangelism was noticeable. He was very progressive and creative, having very unique approaches to evangelism through theater, musical events, club dinners, and feasts. Helping people in need was another of his passions. During his time at Fuller, he provided a complete meal for Thanksgiving for International Students. He contacted supermarkets and donors months in advance in order to secure the meals, using his own money when it was needed. His hobbies were old cars and music. He enjoyed attending concerts, recitals, musicals, and interacting with old cars. He even had a collection of miniature classic cars. He really enjoyed his life. He had the opportunity to do what he was called to do while loving it.

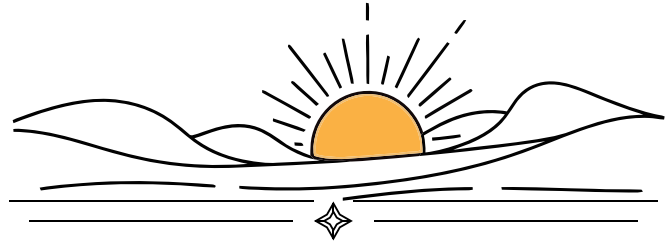
Rev. Cisneros is survived by his wife, Myrian; six sisters (Nelly, Blanca, Mayela, Regina, Nora, and Lourdes); as well as nine nephews and nieces. He loved his family unconditionally, and he was deeply loved. We miss him greatly, and we find comfort in God's promise of eternal life.

— Rev. Dr. Myrian Monnet



David K. Corbin

July 20, 1936 – June 25, 2025



CORBIN, DAVID K (T.61; F.68) SCA 1961 On Trial; 61 School; 67 Oceanside: First, Assoc; 68 FM; 68 Calipatria; 69 (Mar) Santee; 71 Julian; 72 (Jun 1) D/L (J357.2); 75 San Fernando: First, Assoc; 77 PSW; 77 San Fernando: First, Assoc; 78 Altadena; 79 Lomita: Wayside; 81(Apr 1) Leave of Absence; 81 Lynwood; 85 California-Pacific; 85 Lynwood; 86 Guam: Community; 91 Highland; 93 Sun City; 97 Desert Hot Springs; 98 Saipan: Immanuel; 98 (Dec) (J355.2d) Retired

Rev. Dr. David Corbin hailed Hastings, Nebraska, as his early home. Born on July 20, 1936, he grew up with his brother, Gene, and a sister, Cynthia. His family moved to Coronado, California, where he graduated from Coronado High School. In 1959, he graduated from San Diego State, where he met his wife, Sandy.

They were married on June 21, 1967. They welcomed to the family daughter Sheryl and son Larry and added ten grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

At Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, Dave had a great interest in the Greek language and extended his time for further study, then graduated with a Master of Divinity degree. While at Evanston, he served as Assistant Pastor at Emmanuel United Methodist Church. Years later, eager for further study, Dave received his Doctor of Ministry degree at the School of Theology at Claremont.

At Calipatria, he learned to survive the summer heat. His ministry included Julian, where he got into a serious motorcycle accident and fully recovered after months in a full-body cast. The United Methodist Church in Altadena was an active ministry. Before his retirement, he served churches in the far Pacific: Guam as well as Saipan.

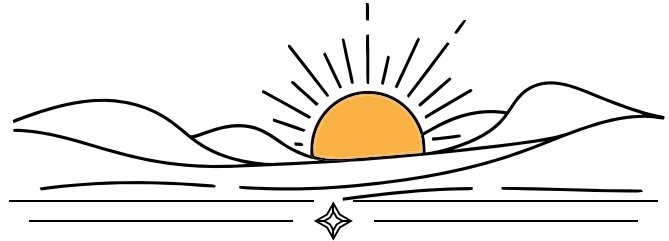
In retirement, he made his home at Fredericka Manor in Chula Vista, where he was “popular” visiting with persons needing support. He loved reading and had a sizable collection of books. He loved good wine and was a motorcycle enthusiast. His colleagues remember him as having a sense of humor and connecting with people. David Corbin made the ultimate transition on June 25, 2025, at his last residence in Poway, California.

— Dennis Ginoza



Gwen Diane Ehrenborg

January 12, 1948 - September 7, 2025



EHRENBORG, GWEN DIANE (P.83; F.88) PSW 1983 PM; 83 Desert Hot Springs (LFT); 85 California-Pacific; 85 Desert Hot Springs; 86 Leave of Absence; 87 SA: Spurgeon, Assoc; 88 FM; 88 Spurgeon, Assoc; 92 Yorba Linda, Co-Pastor (LFT) & Conference Evangelist (LFT); 2001 Sabbatical Leave; 02 General Evangelist; 13 Retired

Gwen Ehrenborg was a gifted pastor, preacher, author, actress, scriptwriter, educator, inspiring storyteller, and founder of two para-church Christian ministries. She possessed the quality of being warm-hearted. She could enter a room of strangers and, upon leaving, have six new friends. Her focus was always on others. When asked, she would humbly give all the credit to Jesus Christ, who worked through her. At age seventeen, she read a Bible verse that changed her life: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." For Gwen, to live was Christ, and she lived the rest of her life serving God by serving people. Gwen served for two years as a missionary in Zaire, Africa, and later in the interior of Mexico with her late husband, Ensign Gene Hunt. She later worked in the fields of education and nursing. Widowed at age twenty-seven while expecting a child, she began studying theology. Gwen married Todd Ehrenborg while they were in seminary and served five churches as a clergy couple.

Pastor Gwen was best known for her ministry, "Living Witnesses," through which she dramatically portrayed outstanding women of Church history, including Susanna Wesley; Katherina Luther (wife of Martin Luther); Lady Clare (the counterpart of St. Francis of Assisi); Catherine Booth (the co-founder of the Salvation Army); Mary of Galilee; Judge Deborah (of the Old Testament); and Mother Theresa. As a General Evangelist for the United Methodist Church, Gwen brought her characters to life across many different denominations throughout the United States, Great Britain, and Europe. In retirement, Gwen reshaped her seven drama scripts into personal letters to readers in her book, **"Our Church Mothers, Letters from Leaders at Crossroads in History."**

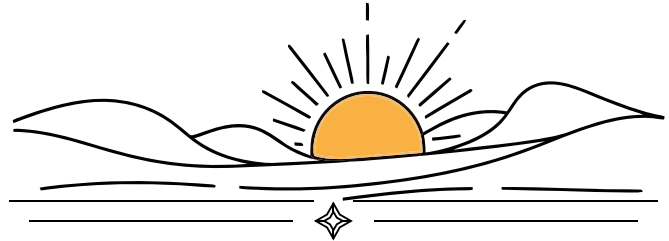
Rev. Ehrenborg was an active member of the National Association of United Methodist Evangelists, as well as a life-member of Christians in the Theatre Arts. In 2004, Gwen founded **"Supporting Women In Ministry International,"** a non-profit network of prayer/support groups across denominational lines. In retirement, Gwen wrote her second book, **"At Home in the Heart of God, A Journey through His Mighty Fortress."**

Gwen most enjoyed serving Christ alongside her husband and their son, Wesley Hunt. If she were meeting you today on earth, she would encourage you, with her bright, baby blue eyes twinkling, with the words of Mary of Galilee, "Do whatever Jesus tells you to do."

- Todd Ehrenborg



*Nancy (Warrick)
Goyings*
June 22, 1944 – January 11, 2026



GOYINGS, NANCY WARRICK (P.93; F.95) Detroit 1993 PM; 93 Kilmanagh; 95 FM; 95 Kilmanagh; 96 (Jan) Leave of Absence; 1999 (California-Pacific, Highgrove UMC); 2003 Transfer to California-Pacific; 03 Riverside: Highgrove UMC; 05 Linda Vista UMC

Rev. Nancy (Warrick) Goyings passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by love, following complications of Alzheimer's. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Nancy grew up in Midland, Michigan, and graduated from the University of Michigan in 1966, carrying with her the intelligence, creativity, and warmth that would shape her life. She married Dr. Ed Goyings in 1966, and together they raised their daughters, Laura Wagner and Cheryl Hardy, in Frankenmuth, Michigan, surrounding them with care and devotion.

Before entering ministry, Nancy shared her gifts as a stained-glass artist, teacher, and communications professional, bringing beauty, clarity, and encouragement wherever she served. Guided by deep faith, Nancy answered God's call to ministry in 1990 and entered United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, where she also met Rev. Randa D'Aoust, the love and partner of her life.

She earned her Master of Divinity, was ordained in the United Methodist Church, and served churches in Michigan and California with faithful leadership, compassionate care, and a generous spirit. In 2014, Nancy and Randa were married, celebrating a love they had shared for more than three decades.

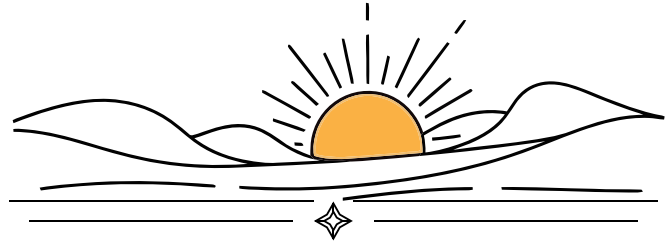
She is lovingly remembered by her wife, Randa; her daughters, Laura (Brian) Wagner and Cheryl Hardy; her sister and brother-in-law, Cathy Warrick and Joe Buttle; her grandchildren, Brianna (Scott) Hoekstra and Daniel (Caitlin) Wagner; special granddaughter Nefeteria (Jordan) Love and great-grandchildren Meiyah and Jabari (all of Michigan); her sister-in-law, Michelle Koonce; her brother-in-law, Jim Edwards; her cousin, Sue Leathen; and many nieces and nephews. She touched many lives with her wit, her faith, her gentle spirit, and the gracious welcome she offered so freely to others.

— Rev. Randa J. D'Aoust



Steve Charles Islander

October 8, 1946 – September 24, 2025



ISLANDER, STEVE CHARLES (PE.98; FE.00) California-Pacific 1998 PE; 98 San Pedro: Grandview; 2000 FE; 00 Morro Bay; Estero Bay; 09 Ramona; 12 Retired

Steve Charles Islander lived a rich, adventurous, and deeply meaningful life, touching countless hearts along the way. Born in Detroit, Michigan, he later made his way to California, where he attended South High School in Torrance and went on to study animal science at California Polytechnic at San Luis Obispo.

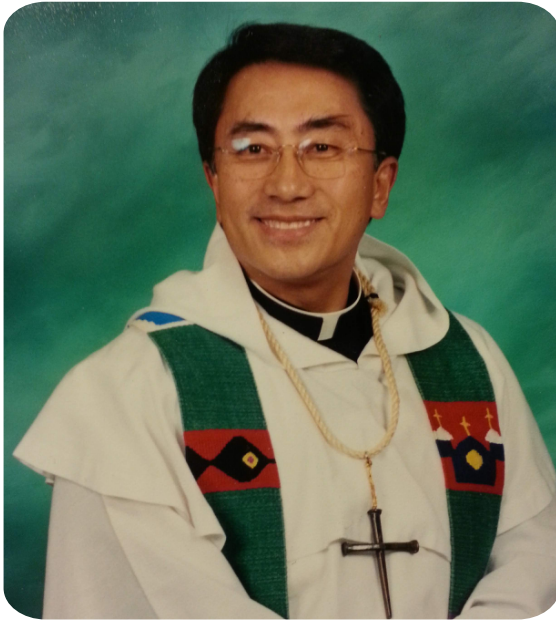
He proudly served his country in the United States Navy aboard the USS Ponchatoula, and after his service, he embraced life with characteristic courage and curiosity—riding the rodeo circuit as a calf roper, helping his father in the crab fishing business in Texas, and building a successful career in logistics management with McCormick Schilling, Safeway, and Merle Norman Cosmetics. Yet Steve's greatest calling came when he followed his heart to the United Methodist Church, returned to school, and became a pastor.

In ministry, he found the peace, purpose, and home his soul had long been seeking; and he took great pride in the outreach programs of the churches he served, always bringing his compassion, open mind, and generous spirit wherever he went.

Steve's life was marked by wanderlust, warmth, and a genuine love for people. He lived in more than 25 places over the course of his life, but San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, became the place he loved most and the home where he spent his final years. He carried with him a lifelong love of the ocean after his Navy days, and he found joy in sailing, scuba diving, biking, gardening, and reading history. A self-proclaimed foodie, he delighted in trying all kinds of foods and telling stories about the most unusual things he had tasted.

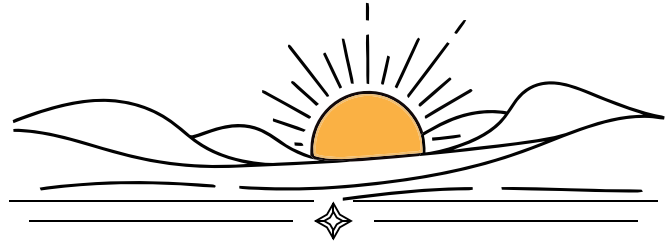
Above all, Steve cherished his family. He is survived by the love of his life, Diana Lynn Parks Evatt Islander; his children, Amy Rafeek, Steve D. Islander, and Randi Cook; his seven beloved grandchildren; and two precious great-grandbabies, all of whom made him deeply proud. He will be remembered for his booming laugh, his off-color jokes, his kind and searching heart, and the love he gave so freely. Though he is gone from our sight, he will remain forever in our hearts, missed beyond words and remembered with great love.

— Amy Islander Rafeek



Youngstone Jhun

February 16, 1944 – November 14, 2025



JHUN, YOUNGSTONE O (PM.83; FM.88) East Ohio 1983 PM; 83 Oceola; 85 Uhrichsville Grace; 88 FM; 88 Transfer to California-Pacific 88 Robertson Korean, Assoc; 90 Glendale: First, Assoc; 91 Redondo Beach: Palos Verdes Korean Min.; 97 Barstow; 99 Pomona: Trinity; 2006 Oceanside: San Luis Rey Valley; 10 (Feb 1) (¶346.1) Troy AC: New York; 11 (¶346.1) Upper New York, Ballston Spa UMC; 12 Retired; 13 (Box Springs Cooperative Parish: Highgrove UMC, AR); 15 Retired

Rev. Youngstone Jhun was born in Seoul, South Korea. He completed his undergraduate work at Yonsei University in South Korea. He was an active member of the church and his community, volunteering, teaching music, leading Bible study, and was constantly looking for ways to help others. His love of serving the people and spreading joy led him to ministry. Along with his lovely wife, Grace, Youngstone immigrated to the United States, where he attended the Methodist Theological School in Ohio for his graduate and seminary work. Youngstone wanted to spread joy and happiness no matter where he went, what he was doing, or who he met. He always had something up his sleeve to put a grin on a person's face or make them chuckle. If you were in his proximity, you would hear him laugh out loud every ten seconds on average, followed by laughter from whoever he was speaking with.

Youngstone was a talented musician and singer and incorporated music into his ministry at every opportunity. He played many instruments, but the most notable were his guitar and his saw. With piano accompaniment by Grace, a phenomenal classically trained pianist, Youngstone was able to dig deep into his Mary Poppins' bag and use just about anything to create a wonderful tune.

In his mission to serve his community, Youngstone would hold free classes to teach anyone anything he was able to teach. Open to any of his parishioners and their friends, he held many types of classes, including, but not limited to, Bible study, guitar, ukulele, the saw, vocal lessons, English lessons for non-native English speakers, computer use, and even held citizenship classes. He was always looking for new methods and different ways to teach as well as preach—to figure out a way to make his sermons grounded and really stick with you.

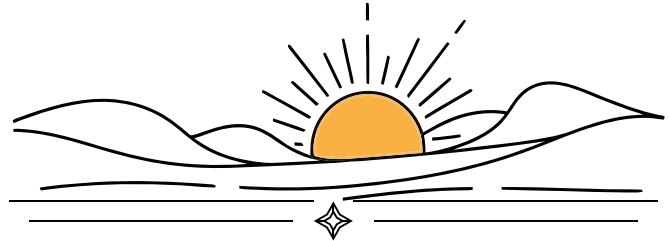
All his parishioners would agree, the most famous being his fun and wacky visual aids, which he and Grace would spend all week, and sometimes all night, making in time for Sunday service: from giant foil anchors, to remote-controlled balloon pops, to a boat life preserver ring that would magically rise into the church rafters. To him, anything was possible—that is, with the help of Grace, of course. Youngstone spread joy and happiness, exemplified great devotion to both his family and his parish, and was a source of endless laughter.

— Eugene & Grace



Gwen Jones-Lurvey

January 4, 1939 - April 6, 2026



JONES-LURVEY, GWEN D (T.68; F.70) Missouri West 68 No Record; Southern New England; 74 SCA 74 San Bernardino: Muscoy & St. Stephen's; 77 PSW; San Bernardino: Muscoy & St. Stephen's; 80 Torrance: Walteria, Co-Pastor & CSULB: Wesley Foundation; 83 SD: Rolando; 85 California-Pacific; 85 SD: Rolando; 89 SD: Wesley & Normal Hts., Co-Pastor; 91 SD: Normal Heights, Co-Pastor; 94 Santee; 2001 Sabbatical Leave; 02 Retired

A tenant farm family's eldest daughter, she made A's in school, played the piano for church and school, and drove a tractor to help with harvesting at age 13. She was accepted as the only female in her engineering classes at the University of Kansas. It was at Wesley Foundation that she encountered a female campus minister that opened her to God's call into the ordained ministry in 1965. She was the first seminary-trained and fully ordained female pastor appointed to a church in 1970 at the newly formed Missouri West Conference and later the Southern New England Conference when her husband, John, went to Harvard and Claremont. Gwen and John were advocates at General Conferences for acceptance of women and clergy couples.

Gwen then continued as a barrier breaker as the first female at San Bernardino: St. Stephens/Muscoy, at Torrance: Walteria, San Diego: Rolando, and San Diego: Wesley. She retired as the first female pastor at Santee UMC in the South District. Then, for 20 years after retirement, Gwen served with John as unappointed English-language pastors at the multi-cultural Wesley United Methodist Church in San Diego.

She and her teammate oversaw finance and personnel at the Wesley Community Services Center during that period. Gwen was still participating in ministry after the close of Wesley UMC at the telephone ministry of La Mesa: First United Methodist Church. She was a Barrier-Breaker of the Year Winner. Gwen could stop a pressing crowd of hundreds and form lines with her commanding voice and outstretched right hand. Her openness could also shock United Methodist Women leaders in the 1970s dissing nude beaches by her gentle, non-judgmental comment that she and John enjoyed going and thought it was beautiful. She amazed physical therapists with her determination to walk again after she broke her hip; and she did!

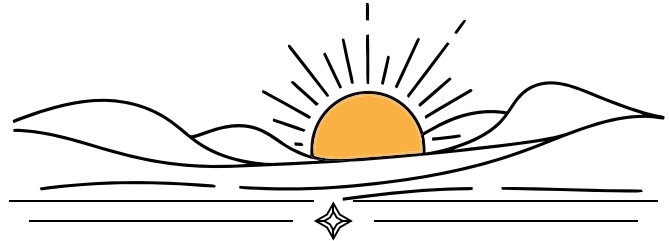
Dementia clouded the smiling face and her infectious laughter that gently counseled couples who praised her and her preparation for weddings. With dementia, she hoped to "die first" so she could be at home with her teammate and lover. She did. Her final facial expression at death was upward looking, not slumped; her previous half-shut eyelids opened wide, and a broad, open-mouthed smile sparkled again as if a wonderful surprise just arrived.

— Rev. Dr. John Lurvey Jr .



Harvey Richard Kemp

January 5, 1942 - March 28, 2026



KEMP, HARVEY RICHARD (T.65; F.68) SCA 1965 On Trial; 65 School; 66 Rolling Hills: Assoc; 68 FE; 69 Phoenix: Grace; 71 Tustin: Aldersgate, Assoc; 74 Sun Valley; 77 PSW; 78 Pomona: Westmont; 83 (DSW, N. Scottsdale); 85 California-Pacific; 85 Lakewood Trinity; 90 La Mirada; 94 El Segundo; 98 Hawthorne; 2004 Retired; 04 (Hawthorne) (LFT); 06 Retired

Harvey was born in Long Beach, California, to Harvey Bert and Helen Marie Kemp. He graduated from David Starr Jordan High School in North Long Beach. He then attended and graduated from Long Beach City College, where he played trumpet in the marching band and marched in the Rose Parade. Years later, he proudly performed at the Homecoming Game Halftime Show with his daughter Kathy, who was a student there. He went on to California State University at Long Beach, earning a BA in History.

He felt the call to the ministry during his senior year and entered Claremont School of Theology, earning a master's degree in Church History. During his second year in seminary, he met Christine Russell and married her during his third year of seminary on November 20, 1965. They celebrated their 60th anniversary last year. His first church assignment was to Rolling Hills United Methodist Church. He graduated on Saturday, moved on Sunday, and started work on Monday. His two daughters, Deanna and Kathy, were born during this appointment.

Following Rolling Hills, Harvey served appointments at Grace UMC in South Phoenix, Arizona; Aldersgate UMC in Tustin, California; Sun Valley UMC; Westmont UMC in Pomona, CA; North Scottsdale UMC in Scottsdale, Arizona; Trinity UMC in Lakewood, California; La Mirada UMC in California; El Segundo UMC in California; and Hawthorne UMC in California. He retired in 2006 with a big celebration that included the Tongan Congregation at Hawthorne, with their wonderful cultural foods and dancing in traditional attire. While at Westmont UMC, Harvey returned to the School of Theology at Claremont and received his Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Counseling. He also received the award for outstanding graduate. After retirement, Harvey and Chris moved to Tucson, Arizona, where they lived for eighteen years. In August 2024, they moved for the last time to The Terraces of Phoenix, an independent senior living community in North Phoenix, where they could be closer to the grandkids who adore them.

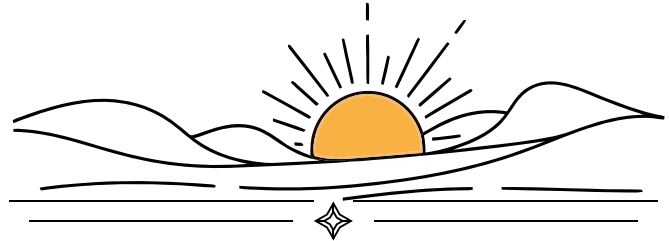
Harvey is survived by his wife, Christine; his two daughters, Deanna Villa and Kathy Kemp; his four grandchildren, Kaylee Kemp, Brittnee Lynch, David Lynch, Jr., and Ashlee Lynch; and his two great-grandsons, Conner Escarzega and ZayVion Lynch.

— His Family



Whan Ki Kim

April 13, 1942–January 27, 2026



KIM, WHAN KI (PM.93) California-Pacific 1990 FL; 90 (Alhambra: First, Assoc Korean Ministry); 93 PM; 93 Alhambra: First, Assoc Korean Min.; 97 (Nov) Disability Leave; 2007 Retired

Whan Ki Kim was the second of six siblings. He is remembered as the older brother who helped pave the way for his family's immigration to America, carrying not only responsibility but deep love for those who followed after him. He earned his Doctor of Ministry degree from Claremont School of Theology and faithfully shepherded congregations throughout Los Angeles County, most notably at Alhambra United Methodist Church. He was known as a caring and devoted pastor who lived out his calling with humility and grace, assisting many to acclimate to America as they immigrated from Korea.

Around 2002, he suffered a stroke that led to a long-term diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. Though this illness gradually took much from him, it also brought his family closer together, uniting them in care, devotion, and love for one another. He was especially cared for by his older sister, Eun Ki Kim, who remained by his side until his final breath on January 27, 2026.

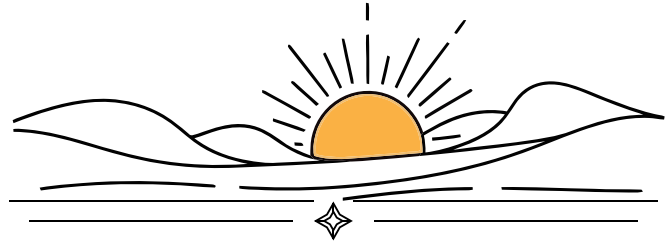
Even as memory faded, it was always remarkable what remained—Pai Chai's school song and the hymns of his faith. These were never forgotten, resting deep within his spirit. We remember him as a faithful servant of God. He now rests in the arms of his Master, hearing the words from Matthew 25:21: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master."

— Eun Ki Kim



Russ Locke

April 11, 1943 - September 21, 2025



LOCKE, RUSS MONROE (PM.77; FM.81) PSW 1977 PM; 77 School; 78 Whittier First UMC, Assoc; 81 FM; 82 Mission Hills UMC; 85 California-Pacific; 85 Mission Hills UMC; 87 Nestor UMC; 2013 Retired;

Russ Locke was born April 11, 1943, and passed away September 21, 2025, in Port Angeles, Washington, at the age of 82. Russ was born in Minnesota to John & Virginia (Wilson) Locke, who preceded him in death. He leaves behind his younger brother, John L. Locke II; nieces Lesley Locke and JoNell Locke-Viacrucis (Paul); along with great-niece Allison Locke and great-nephews John Viacrucis & Aaron Viacrucis.

After his time in the Navy for six years, he went to seminary to get his Doctor of Ministry and became a United Methodist minister. He served communities in Southern California for over forty years. He touched numerous lives with his compassion and listening.

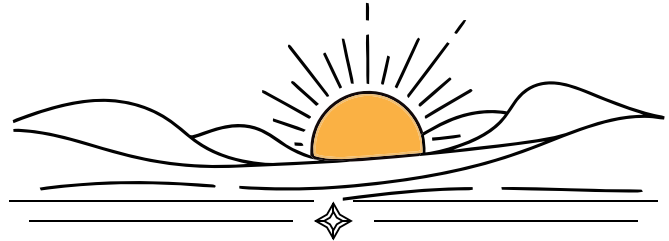
In his ministry, he was quiet, solid, and dependable. He extended friendship and collegueship to fellow past pastors. He also provided guidance as chaplain for the police department in San Diego.

— JoNell Locke-Viacrucis



Frances Cooper Materra

January 21, 1949 – July 22, 2025



MATERRA, FRANCES COOPER (PM.75; FM.80) SCA 1975 PM; 75 School; 77 PSW; 77 School; 78 Redondo Beach First UMC, Assoc; 80 FE; 80 School; 81 LB: Evangelical; 82 Gardena First; 84 Glendale: Wesley; 85 California-Pacific; 85 North Oxnard UMC; 87 UC Santa Barbara: Campus Minister; 90 Rutgers University: Campus Minister Wesley Foundation; 94 (Jan) UCLA: Campus Minister; 96 (Dec) Disability Leave; 98 St. Paul's UMC of Redondo Beach; 2002 (J358.1) Incapacity Leave; 14 Retired

Rev. Frances Cooper Materra was born in San Diego, but moved around quite a bit growing up due to her father's work in the aerospace arena. She and her brother, John, were raised in the United Methodist Church, and she took those teachings to heart, focusing on the call to justice and compassion. She attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, and spent a good deal of her time in activist movements, including supporting farmworkers and protesting the Vietnam War. She would later joke that she spent so much time with these efforts that she almost forgot that the classroom is supposed to be part of the college experience. She attended Claremont School of Theology, becoming part of that early pathbreaking group of women to be active clergy in the United Methodist Church.

Like other pathbreakers, she found the full range of heartache and hope, support and cruelty, being a female minister where none had existed before. She married Gary Ward in 1984, and for some time after the marriage, they each kept their own last names. Finally, with the transracial adoption of the first one and then two infant boys, they decided to invent a new family name. Fran thought that simply taking the man's family name was a tradition she wanted to rethink. So, they came up with Materra, from Latin Mater and Terra. The idea being that whatever the place of origin and particular heritage of each family member, they were all part of Mother Earth.

Fran had a special love for campus ministry, and eventually she was able to land two prestigious campus ministry positions, one at Rutgers in New Jersey, followed by UCLA in Los Angeles. These places held particularly happy times for her, but wherever she was appointed, she changed lives, and the connections she made were wide indeed.

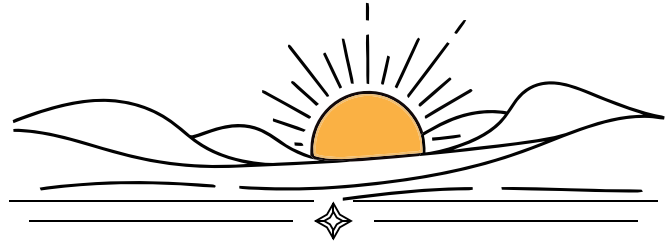
Unfortunately, physical ailments forced an early disability retirement. Her final years were spent at a ranch in Potrero, California, and she reveled in the peace and beauty there. She battled cancer for a number of years, but continued to lovingly support her children - Rafael, Zachary, and Yvette. Through social media, she continued to throw the stubborn ounces of her weight towards the goal of wholeness (salvation) for all of humanity. She will be missed.

— Gary Ward Materra



Heisik Oh Lee

April 21, 1936 – September 19, 2025



OH, HEISIK (PM.83; FM.88) PSW 1983 PM; 83 School; 84 Valencia; 85 California-Pacific; 85 Valencia; 88 FM; 88 Valencia; 89 General Board of Discipleship; 92 (Feb 1) (J426.1) Tennessee; 95 (Mar) Seoul: Ewha Girls Foreign Language High School; 2002 EM: Seoul: Servant-Leadership Development Ministry; 04 EM: Seoul: Korean Methodist Church, Grace; 06 Retired

Heisik Oh Lee was born in Pyongyang, Korea, in a devoted Christian family as the sixth of eight children. She often spoke fondly of her father, Mun-hwan Oh, who was an educator and principal of several institutions, a chair and editor of several press companies, and a publisher and writer known for his work on Robert Jermain Thomas, a missionary martyred near his hometown. After Korea's liberation in 1945, he moved his family south to Seoul, where he led missional ministries, funding and planting numerous churches while faithfully pursuing his calling in education and the press. Following her father's footsteps, Heisik devoted her life to education and missions. She taught English for ten years at Ewha Girls High School, her alma mater. At age forty-four, when she was a professor at Konkuk University, God called her to leave everything behind, go to California, and study at the School of Theology at Claremont.

When she took this extraordinary step of faith in 1980, she did not expect her family would follow shortly after, and that her husband, Joon-Young Lee, would study with her and be ordained together as United Methodist ministers at the same time. In 1983, they planted Placentia Korean UMC in Placentia, CA, and served there for six years, until Heisik became a Korean editor at United Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, Tennessee, while supporting her husband's ministry at Nashville Korean UMC for six years. Then the Lord led her back to Korea to become the principal at Ewha Foreign Language High School to serve there for six years. She then became the founding principal of Myongji Foreign Language High School, to help build it from the ground up until her retirement at age seventy. But she was not yet ready to retire.

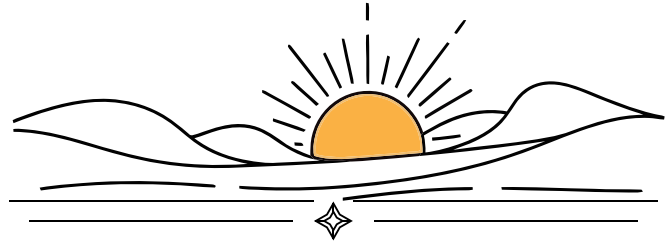
For the next ten years, she prayerfully established Grace Alternative School to help youngsters who were struggling with diverse issues and addictions, a ministry she considered the most rewarding work of her life. Her final ministry was advising her youngest son and praying for his pastoral ministry at the very first church she and her husband planted together. After seven months of hospitalization, she passed ever so peacefully in Yongin, Korea, while listening to her four children—Sunkyung, Stan, Irene, and Joseph—sing her favorite hymns. Her legacy of faith lives on through her four children and ten grandchildren.

— Sunkyung Lee



Seungbae Joseph Paik

March 18, 1942 – August 30, 2025



PAIK, SEUNGBAE JOSEPH (PM.83; FM.86) Korean Methodist Church; No Record; PSW; 1983 PM; 83 Pomona Valley: Korean; 85 California-Pacific; 85 Pomona Valley: Korean; 86 FM; 86 Pomona Valley: Korean; 88 South Pasadena: Pacific; 93 Glendale: Wesley; 2000 Anaheim: West Anaheim; 05 Westmont UMC; 10 Westmont UMC (1/2); 11 (J358) Retired; 11 (Westmont UMC) (AR, 1/2); 13 Retired

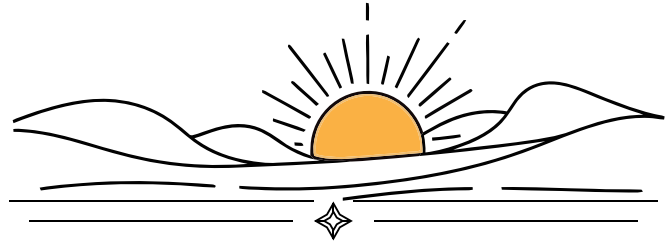
Rev. Seungbae Joseph Paik slipped into glory on August 30, 2025. He was born in a small farming village in North Korea. When the 38th parallel divided Korea, his family was also divided. He lost his mother and 8 of 9 sisters. He became an activist for the reunification of Korea and longed to reunite with his family.

He pastored in the United Methodist Church since the 80s and was known as a person of profound love and care. In his retirement, he enjoyed spending time with friends and family. He leaves behind his wife of more than 50 years, Eunice Paik; three sons, Frank, Joseph, and Benjamin; and grandchildren. He will be sorely missed, but we trust we shall see him on the other side.

— His Family



Janis Specks
November 5, 1948-June 16, 2025



SPECKS, JANIS (previously HALE) (DM.96; FD.99) California-Pacific 1996 DM; 96 Santa Ana: First, Youth Director & Brief Psychotherapy, Counselor; 97 San Juan Capistrano: Staff Builders Hospice Svc., Counselor; 97 (Sep) Leave of Absence; San Francisco University, Chaplaincy Residence Program; 99 FD; 99 San Francisco University, Chaplaincy Residence Program; 99 (Sep 20) EM: VITAS Hospice; 2002 City of Hope, Chaplain; 06 (Jul 14) EM: Providence Holy Cross Hospital, Chaplain; 13 Retired

Janis was born in Ames, Iowa, but the family moved to Southern California. Her mother came from a long line of Methodists. Jan was married right out of high school in Santa Barbara. After moving back to the San Fernando Valley, the couple had two children, Shannon (Smith) and Sean (Hale), and two granddaughters. As a stay-at-home mom, Jan took two classes each year until she received her BA degree. After her divorce some 20 years later, she studied for and received an MA in Clinical Psychology and began practice as an MFCC intern.

Jan had a life-long interest in the United Methodist Church; she had been an active and consistent volunteer for her pastors and, at the same time, a pre-school assistant and teacher's aide in elementary schools. She also taught puppetry and did story telling with children in the park in summer. She left her psychology counseling and thought seriously about being a pastor herself. She attended Claremont School of Theology and did a year's study in theology. However, she had a life-long problem with dyslexia and found the reading material very taxing. She also realized her gift for service was best expressed one-on-one, as she had done in counseling. After a dear friend had a life-threatening illness, Jan believed she had a call to become a hospital chaplain. She had a close friend who helped her prepare for the Deacons Order, and Jan became an ordained Deacon.

She then went into an intensive "boot camp" for chaplains, serving at Stanford Children's Hospital and UCSF Hospital. She then became a Chaplain at City of Hope in Duarte and, a few years later, at Providence Holy Cross and St. Joseph Hospital in Burbank. Near the end of her service at Holy Cross, she received the "Mission Spirit" award, not often given and never to one in the Chaplaincy department.

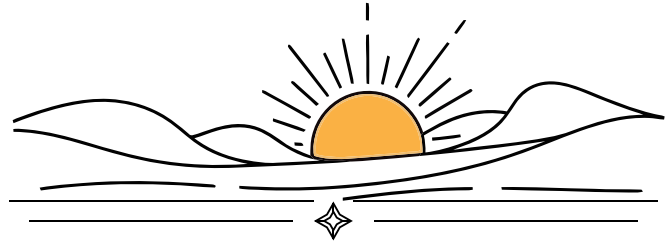
Jan married Jeffrey Specks in 2011 and retired soon afterwards. She was a talented artist, working with wood and metal designs and creating small village set pieces and collages. Jan and Jeff were involved in "compassionate" (hospital) clowning. They also travelled to Costa Rica, Japan, Israel, Northern Italy, and Ireland. Sadly, Jan developed Alzheimer's disease in the last few years of her life, which became more acute in the last five years. She was a wonderful, kind, giving, and spiritual person, and I love and miss her very much.

— Jeff Specks



J. Robert Stimmel

August 20, 1946–March 10, 2026



STIMMEL, J ROBERT (BOB) (PM.69; FM.74) SCA 1969 PM; 69 School; 72 Fillmore: Bardsdale; 74 FM; 74 Safford; 77 PSW; 77 Highland: First; 78 Palmdale: First; 81 Riverside: Grace; 85 California-Pacific 85 Moreno Valley, Min.; 86 Asst. Conference Treasurer; 90 Pasadena: St. James; 93 Lancaster; 99 (Mar) School; 99 Sabbatical Leave; 2000 Downey; 04 Retired

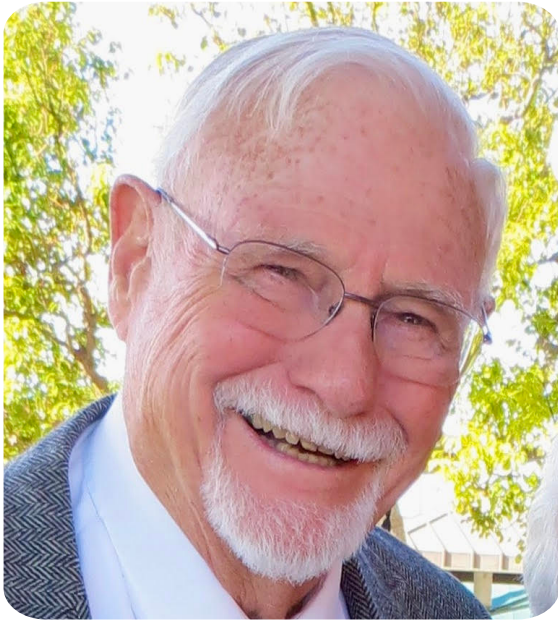
Bob was a thoughtful, loving, generous man. He was lighthearted but could convey an honest sense of reverence and wonder for the world and the story of each person he encountered. He had a way with words—his writing was impeccable, and his respect for the subject matter is appreciable. His attention to detail was legendary. He was a good listener, astute and curious, but he did not linger. He took action on what he learned. He was well regarded in the ministry and often cited as a mentor.

Although Bob traveled extensively, he was proud of his California roots and lived most of his life there. He received a BA from California State University, Los Angeles. He was ordained Deacon and received a Doctor of Religion from the School of Theology at Claremont. In 1972, Bob became pastor of his first church. Two years later, he was ordained an Elder and served several churches in the now California-Pacific Conference, including founding the church in Moreno Valley, and as Director and Campus Minister at University of California, Riverside. Continuing his lifelong pursuit of learning and personal and professional growth, Bob received an MA from Pepperdine University in Human Resources Management.

In addition to ministering local churches, Bob served as the Conference Statistician and Assistant Treasurer for the Conference. Bob had two children, Eric and Amy. He met Billie Jo Stratton at a Christmas Eve service at San Gabriel UMC, a life-changing chance encounter. They got married two years later. They served three more churches before retiring. Bob served on many other committees and organizations, bringing his perspective to each, especially issues related to finances, and was regarded for his integrity, honesty, and unbiased approach.

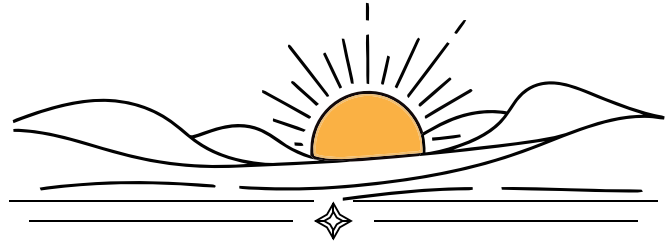
In retirement, Bob and Billie Jo made their home in Cayucos and became integrated into the local community. Bob was active in the Chamber of Commerce and honored as Citizen of the Year. He continued to support the church community, doing financial audits and helping in the San Luis Obispo Church office. He gave back to the larger community, volunteering at California Polytechnic, San Luis Obispo, and in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. Bob died peacefully on a normal Spring evening after watching a baseball game. He was predeceased by his wife, Billie Jo, and is survived and missed by his family and many friends and colleagues.

— Eric Stimmel



Wallace Truman

March 28, 1929 - February 9, 2026



TRUMAN, WALLACE LEROY (LEE) (T.52; F.57) Detroit; 1952 On Trial; 52 School; 53 (Southern New Jersey, Atco); 56 Transfer to SCA; 56 Descanso; 57 FM; 57 Descanso; 59 Glendale: Pacific; 62 Alhambra: Granada Park; 67 Monrovia; 71 Westlake; 77 PSW; 71 Westlake; 80 Whittier: First; 85 California-Pacific; 85 Orange: First; 91 Sabbatical Leave; 92 Retired

The Rev. Dr. Lee Truman peacefully passed into Heaven just seven weeks before his 97th birthday. As a Methodist pastor for 40 years, he was appointed to eight churches – one in New Jersey and seven in California. Everywhere he went, the congregations grew, buildings were erected or repaired, and preschools were established. He was a servant pastor who loved people and invited them to love Jesus, themselves, and others. He always connected with the city administration and prominent service clubs in order to ‘make things happen.’ In addition, he wrote a column, “Let’s Talk”, for 28 years for Copley News Service.

His ministry included taking young people on work teams to Africa to build a bridge, Israel to share in kibbutz life, Australia to help build a camping facility, and to an orphanage in disrepair in Naples, Italy. The Rotary Club in Orange sent him and his wife, Ruth, with four young businesswomen to India to assist the Rotary Club there.

Lee loved life! He skied, sailed, learned to fly, restored antique cars, was a talented painter, and a consummate woodworker. At his Celebration of Life in March, people came from great distances to remember him and to donate money to the church by purchasing his paintings and woodwork items.

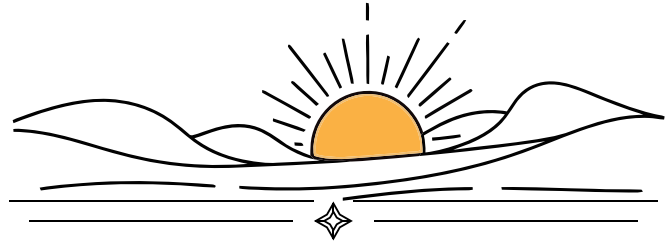
In a 73½-year marriage, he and Ruth parented four children into adult life: Mark and his wife, Linda, who have greeted him in Heaven; daughter Rebecca and life partner, Dr. Brian Von Herzen; son Timothy and fiancé Dana Sessen; and son Nathan and wife Susan; plus, five grandchildren and a 21½-year-old great-grandson, Elliot. He also leaves his award-winning book, *On the Way to the Pulpit*, which can be found on Amazon if you want to know more about Lee Truman, servant of the Lord.

— Ruth Truman



Mark E. Ulrickson

August 13, 1951 – February 24, 2026



ULRICKSON, MARK EDWARD (PM.75; FM.79) SCA 1975 PM; 75 School; 77 PSW; 77 Garden Grove First UMC, Assoc; 80 Globe; 85 Desert Southwest; 85 Globe; 86 Transfer to California-Pacific 86 College UMC; 95 Northridge UMC; 2004 Santa Ana District Superintendent; 11 Los Altos UMC; 16 Retired

The Reverend Dr. Mark E. Ulrickson was a beloved pastor and leader in the California-Pacific Conference for over four decades. Mark brought to every situation a combination of wit and warmth, a call to seek justice, and an invitation to delight in God's gifts. Making music and connecting with the community remained central throughout his ministry. Mark was a PK (Preacher's Kid). His parents were Rev. J. Wayne Ulrickson and Charlotte Ulrickson.

He grew up in Southern California, graduating from San Diego State University before responding to a calling that led him to Claremont School of Theology, where he earned a Doctor of Ministry degree in 1977. He arrived at Claremont having already made one of the best decisions of his life, marrying his high school sweetheart and best friend, Trisha (Collins), in 1971. In Claremont, they started a family and several lifelong friendships.

In each setting of ministry, Mark led with genuine care and curiosity, encouraging parishioners to ask not just "What do we believe?" but "What does belief require of us?" He was busy starting bands, encouraging creative music and worship styles, organizing ski trips to Mammoth, and building relationships with interfaith groups and the wider community.

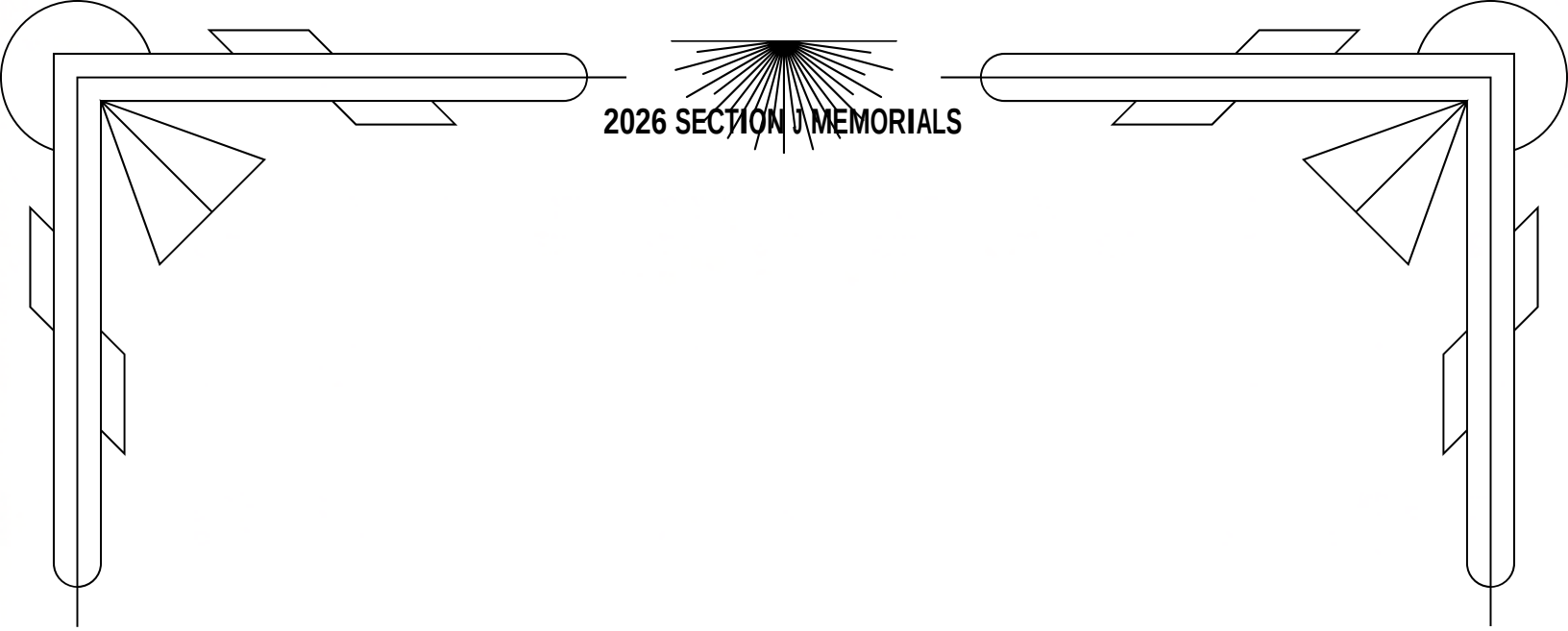
The church was always more than a building for Mark. Music was woven into everything Mark did. He played guitar in worship, on work sites, and around whatever gathering needed a song. He loved the cello, participating in local chamber groups and continuing his music education at Long Beach Community College. He coordinated trips to Taizé communities in France and Chicago, and to the ecumenical community of Iona, Scotland. Places where prayer and music intertwined were always a draw.

He chaired the Neighborhood/La Vecindad Board, led arson rebuild work teams for a decade, and earlier, in his ministry, served as President of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music, Worship and the Arts. Mark's humor and insight enriched his ministry.

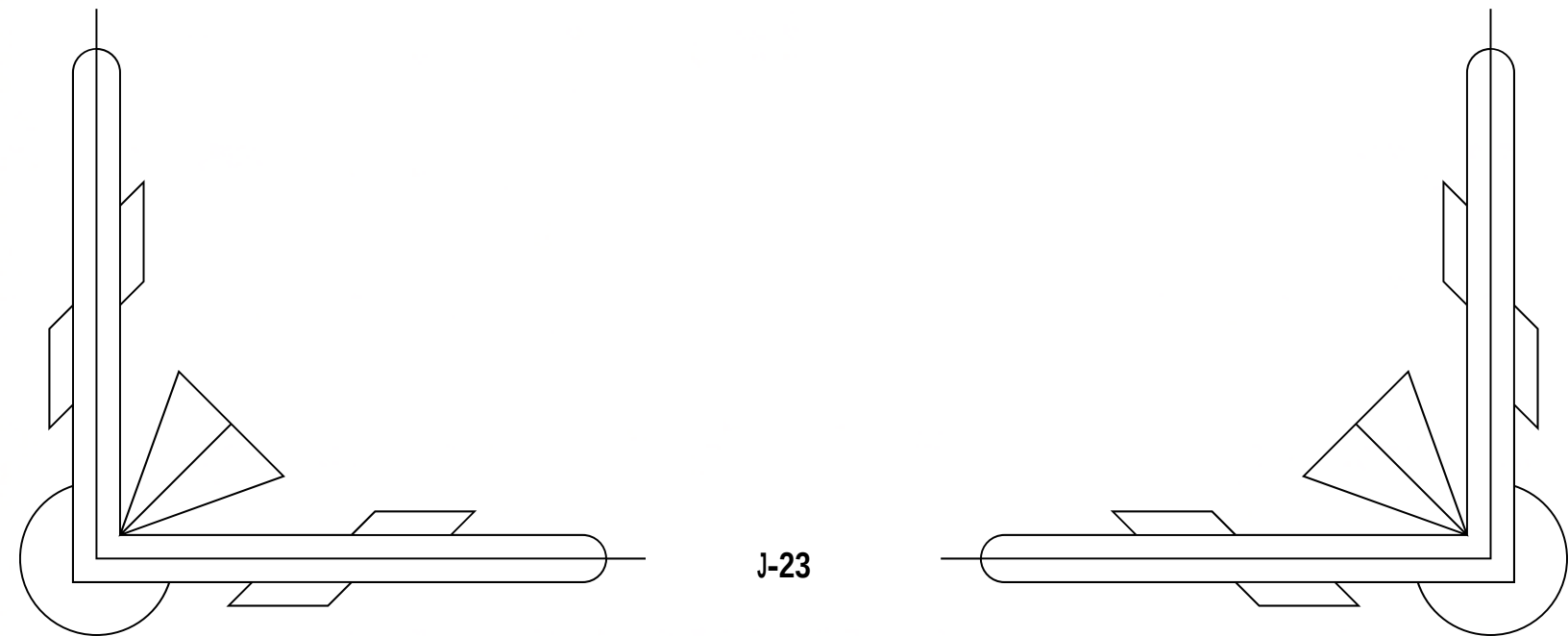
Sermon illustrations often incorporated family stories, sometimes embellishing a bit! Church members often joked they had to watch new releases in the theater before Mark mentioned the movie's plot in the morning message. Mark could disarm a tense situation, crack up a crowd of strangers on a service project, or turn an ordinary Sunday into something that has stuck with people for years. He encouraged others to answer the call to ministry and made a difference in many lives.

Mark is survived by his wife, Trish; their daughters, Sommer and Shannon; and his grandchildren, Noa, Avril Sofia, and Miles.

— His Family

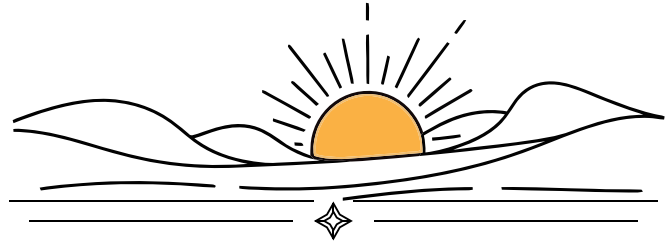


Laity





John Salesi Atu
September 12, 1977 – February 8, 2026



ATU, JOHN SALESI (SIONE) (PL.17; FL.19; LPA.24) California-Pacific 2017 PL; 17 (Colton UMC, Assoc) (1/4); 19 FL; 19 (Evangelical UMC); 22 No Appointment; 23 (Feb 1) FL; 23 (Feb 1) (Evangelical UMC); 24 LPA; 24 (Evangelical UMC);

John Salesi Atu was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, to his parents, Iteni and Elenoa Atu of Fakakai Haapai. He was the youngest of his siblings. They were Ofa, Afiora, Semisi (deceased), Temisi, and Selu. John's family moved to the mainland, where they settled down in Riverside, California.

As a young man, he worked construction. At Cal State San Bernardino, he got a degree in criminal justice. John felt God's call upon his life. He graduated in 2011 with a Master of Divinity.

He returned to Colton United Methodist, where he met his wife, Tahoa Pangai Tenisi. They got married on December 22, 2013. They are blessed with five lovely children: Saimone, Manusiu, Iteni, Lisita, and Senny May.

"Pastor John was a BIG man - big stature, big heart, big faith. He did small things with a big passion for leading souls to salvation. He embraced small wins with big commitment to furthering the kingdom. His vision and dedication to his flock continues on in deeds and actions as we remember this gentleman of GOD" (Denise Lovarto).

John was a loving husband, father, son, and brother. "He was a beloved father. We had eleven years of memories, and his legacy shall live on" (son Saimone).

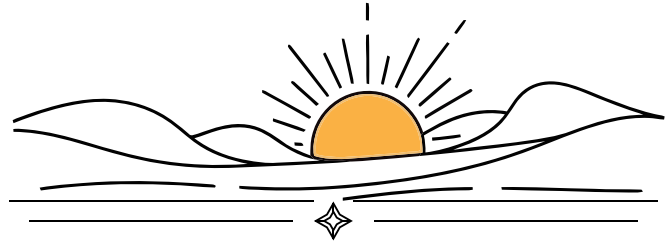
– Tahoa Atu

Life Companions



Rita Calderhead

October 1, 1945-October 7, 2025



CALDERHEAD, ROBERT ORVAL (P.73; F.80) SCA 1973 PM; 73 School; 76 Upland: Assoc; 77 PSW; 77 Big Bear Lake; 80 FM; 80 Big Bear Lake; 82 Coronado: St. Paul's; 85 California-Pacific; 85 Hope UMC of San Diego; 2000 Westlake Village UMC; 03 La Canada UMC; 08 Retired; 09 (First UMC of Chula Vista, Interim); 10 Retired; 14 (Jan 1) (Murrieta UMC); 14 Retired

Connie Calderhead was born Rita Colleen Byers to Kenneth and Doris Byers in Los Angeles, California. She had one sister, Kathy. Connie graduated from Los Angeles High School and attended California State University, Los Angeles. While there, she joined the Thetas and began lifelong friendships with her sisters. Connie graduated with a degree in sociology and then was hired as a 5th grade teacher in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles.

Connie was a lifelong disciple of Jesus Christ and a devoted member of the United Methodist Church. In the mid-1960s, Connie became a member of a Methodist Conference young adult work team and spent two weeks on a small island off Hong Kong renovating a youth camp. Connie met Rob Calderhead in 1968 at a single young adult group at Westchester UMC. They were married on August 23, 1969. Their two sons, Chris (1975) and Kevin (1978), completed their family. Over the years, the family grew as grandchildren were added – Kaleb, Brayden, Hailee, and Charlotte.

In addition to her roles as wife and mother, Connie also worked outside the home. She was a teacher's aide at two schools in Poway and established and ran a computer lab at another. Her true calling was working with youth groups at five different churches over many years. Later, Connie became a realtor in San Diego County. She also flipped two homes, one in Oceanside and another in El Cajon, before flipping became a thing on HGTV. Connie was also actively dedicated to supporting Rob's ministry. Connie enjoyed traveling. She and Rob were blessed to take several cruises, as well as trips to England, Scotland, France, Canada, Mexico, Egypt, and, on two occasions, the Holy Land.

Connie loved everything about being a homemaker, including decorating and decor, entertaining, cooking, and even architecture. Her artistic side came out in her crafts, particularly the toile painting she did for many years. Connie was diagnosed with dementia in 2015 and struggled with the disease until her death on October 7, 2025.

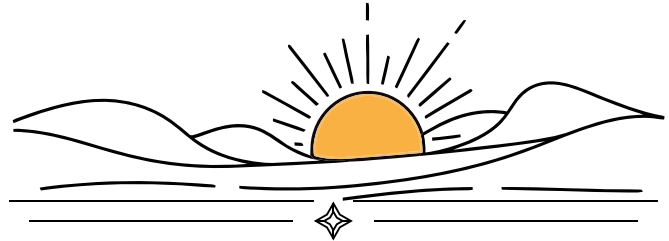
Connie is survived by: Rob, her husband of 56 years; Chris, her son, and his wife Sara Williams; Kevin, her son, and his wife Casey; grandchildren Kaleb and his wife Lisbet, Brayden, Hailee, and Charlotte; Kathy Ingalsbe, her sister, and husband Bud; Greg Ingalsbe, her nephew, and his wife Jana; Cacey Tangney, her sister-in-law, and her husband Jeff Witwer.

— Rob Calderhead



Mildred Chang

October 17, 1931 - January 19, 2026



CHANG, DONALD MARK (T.58; F.61) SCA 58 Lecturer, Dept. of Gen. Studies U.S.C.; 59 Inglewood: Lennox Blvd; 60 School; 61 Asst. Prof., American Univ.; 64 Adjunct Prof., American Univ.; 71 S'y.; 72 Lect., U. of Hawaii; PSW 77; C-P 85; 85 Retired

Mildred Matsunaga Chang passed away peacefully, after a hard-fought battle with cancer. She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Donald, and they were rejoined at Punchbowl National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific on May 15th, 2026, after a private ceremony. Mildred was born in Maui to Iuke and Tsuru Matsunaga on October 17th, 1931, but she was raised in Kauai.

She grew up in a large family with brothers and sisters from two sides of the family due to her mother remarrying. She had four half-brothers and sisters and three additional brothers. Like many families in Hawaii during that time, life was not always easy, and from a young age she learned what it meant to work hard and take care of others. She graduated from Kaua'i High School and eventually left the Island to attend nursing school at Queen's Hospital in Oahu.

What many people may not know is that she originally wanted to become a journalist. She loved writing and worked on her school paper when she was younger. But back then, opportunities were different, and finances mattered. Nursing school was a more practical path because it was shorter, including room, board, and on-the-job training. So, she made the sacrifice that so many from her generation made. She chose the stable path, not necessarily the easy one.

She eventually became a registered nurse at Tripler Army Medical Center, where she spent about forty years caring for people before retiring in 2002. Nursing wasn't just her profession. It was part of who she was. She had a natural instinct to care for others, and even after retirement, she kept finding ways to help people, whether it was volunteering for Channel 2's Action Line or giving her time to the Blood Bank.

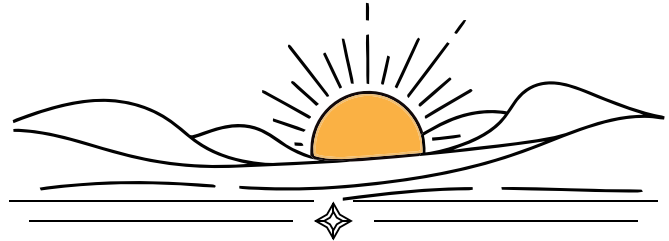
After her husband's passing, she decided to travel the world to see as many new places as she could and embarked on numerous group trips and cruises with her friends. She enjoyed spending time with her brother Harold and his wife, Rose, and with other family and friends who came by her apartment to visit. She loved to sing and play the ukulele and enjoyed crafts and sewing. She was sharp as a tack up until her passing and leaves behind two brothers, numerous nieces and nephews, and many, many friends. Mildred will be greatly missed.

— Kevin Matsunaga



Anesiu Niusini Fine

July 19, 1950 – January 25, 2026



FINE, LANGI (P.78; F.85) PSW 78 Inglewood: Lennox (Tongan); 79 School/ Inglewood: Lennox, Tongan, (LFT), 81 Compton, First., Assoc., Tongan & Inglewood: Lennox, Assoc., Tongan; Ontario: Trinity, Tongan Fellowship; 82 Lennox (LFT), 83 Ontario, First, Tongan Min. Assoc.; C-P 85; 87 Honolulu: First, Assoc; 95 Waimanalo: First Tongan; 12 Retired

Anesiu Niusini Fine graduated with honors from Queen Salote College. She left for Hawaii in 1972 to attend university there. Soon after, her late father, Rev. Siope Latai Pouono Niusini, became the first Tongan pastor at First United Methodist Church, Honolulu.

Anesiu was a woman of courage and faith. She was very sweet, polite, and soft-spoken. She had a heart to serve and served well. She was a great leader and a wonderful listener. It truly was a blessing to know her. She found her soulmate, the late Rev. Dr. Langi Fine. They were married on July 20th, 1973. Soon after their marriage, her husband went into ministry and together they committed their lives to faithfully and humbly serve our loving God. Through their ministry they built about 15 Tongan United Methodist congregations – mainly within the Hawaii District.

Anesiu served as President of the Tongan United Methodist Women, Hawaii District. She also served as the President of the Queen Salote College Alumni Association – Hawaii Chapter, hosted countless bake sales and fundraisers for the church, as well as many other gifts she possessed. She was more than a mother and a wife – she was a guide, a protector, a teacher, a safe place, and, most importantly, a humble servant of God. Her love was steady like the tide, constant, and comforting.

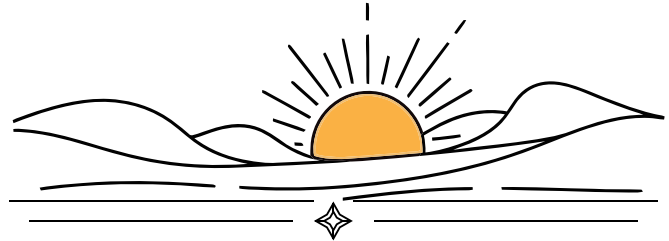
She loved God very much. She taught her children the love of God, the value of family, the power of humility, and the importance of honoring where they came from. Through her words and her actions, she showed them what it means to love deeply and live faithfully. Anesiu is survived by her children, Frank (Mollie), Fusi (Rev. Ongo Koli), Wesley (Losevati), Sima (Ataata Atualevao), Kolone (Patamo So'oalo), and Ahokava; seventeen grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. She was a phenomenal woman. A devoted wife. A loving mother. A caring grandmother and the sweetest to her great-grandchildren.

— Sima Fine-Atualevao



*Aileen Crews Merriman
Houghton*

July 16, 1923 – January 20, 2026



HOUGHTON, DAVID R. (T.45; F.51) SCA 45 San Pedro: Grand View; 48 School; 51 Protestant Chaplain, Camarillo State Hosp.; 73 Supply; 74 Retired; California-Pacific 85 Retired ; (Died 11/25/2002)

Aileen Grace Crews was born in Galveston, Texas, and passed away at the age of 102. She was raised in San Pedro, California, after moving there at the age of 10 and graduated from San Pedro High in 1941. She spent the next three years in nurse's training at French Hospital in San Francisco. Once she became a registered nurse, in order to support the war effort, she joined the Navy. She was stationed at Balboa Park in San Diego, taking care of men wounded in WWII. After meeting and marrying her first husband, Russell P. Merriman, in 1945, they moved to South Carolina where she had two sons. After Russell was killed in a plane crash in 1947, she moved home to San Pedro.

She married David R. Houghton in 1948 and settled in Camarillo, California, where David was the Protestant chaplain at Camarillo State Hospital. She had two daughters and another son living in Camarillo for 23 years. She and David helped found the Camarillo United Methodist Church, were very active members, and made many lifelong friendships. Aileen and David participated in countless volunteer activities throughout those years. During this time, she worked as a registered nurse while also finding time to earn her BA from Redlands University.

After retirement in 1983, she and David moved to Thousand Palms, California, where they joined the Palm Springs United Methodist Church. She served on many committees at the Church and served as president of the United Methodist Women for three years. She also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and the Desert AIDS Project. David died in 2002, but Aileen continued to live a happy and active life with her many friends and various dogs. In 2017, she moved to San Luis Obispo to be near her daughter, Claire, where she lived with her dog, Maggie, until her death.

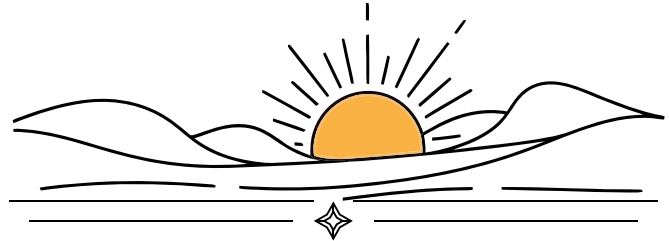
She is survived by her three sons, Steve Merriman (Lisa), Russell Merriman (Deanna), and Darrell Houghton (Vivienne); and two daughters, Lynne Harris (John) and Claire Mastin (Tom); nine grandchildren and many great-grandchildren; along with her brother, Jean Crews.

— Claire Mastin



Eric Steven Jacobson

October 11, 1948 – September 8, 2025



JACOBSON, SUSAN HOLLIS (SUZI) (PM.89; FM.92) North Texas 1989 PM; 89 McKinney First; St Lukes Love Field; 92 FM; 92 McKinney First; St Lukes Love Field; 2000 (California-Pacific, El Centro: First); 2002 Transfer to California-Pacific (J337.1); 02 El Centro: First; 08 Imperial Valley College; 11 Retired (J358); 12 (Holtville, AR, LFT); 13 Retired

Eric Steven Jacobson finished his course in faith at home in Prescott Valley. He was born in Oakland, California, and married Susan “Suzi” Hollis in Berkeley, California, on February 3, 1974. They celebrated their fiftieth anniversary in 2024 in Prescott. Eric is survived by Suzi and their family: daughter, Jennifer Jacobson; son-in-law, Evan Hlavacek; granddaughters Ava Linn and Elizabeth Rene Hlavacek; son, Andrew Jacobson; and sister-in-law, Cathie Linn.

Eric grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area; earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from California State, Hayward, in 1976. After moving to Texas in 1978, he earned his PhD/ABD in U.S. History from North Texas University in Denton. In 1992, Eric accepted a position as Professor of History and Political Science at Imperial Valley College in California. When he retired in 2015, he and Suzi moved to Arizona to be near kids and grandkids. Eric spent his retirement years giving back to the community, volunteering with Special Olympics, Meals on Wheels, Sharlot Hall Museum, and the PGA of America, where he taught golf to military veterans.

An avid golfer and a huge sports fan, Eric was always up for a conversation about sports or history. He had an affinity for knowledge, the state of the world, and a keen curiosity about family histories. He traveled to many historical places in China, Syria, Africa, Central America, and Europe. Professor Jacobson could often be found at home reading historical biographies and scriptures. He loved the ongoing fellowship of his family and his church; he was a lifelong member of the United Methodist Church. One of his most treasured achievements was the establishment of the Spiritual Journeymen, an active group of Methodist men in Carrollton, Texas, that continues to this day. After worship, he was quick to share a story about the past or a joke about the present.

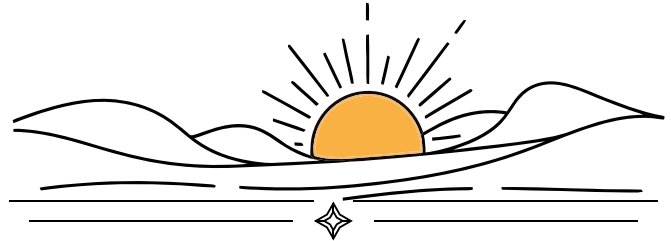
During his retirement, he supported his grandchildren in their pursuits to the fullest, attending home and away games, all while wearing his favorite jerseys. Eric was quick to remind people of the epic concerts and sporting events he had attended in his life and bragged about his collegiate work experience as a San Francisco city tour guide. Eric remembered many special quotes, anecdotes, and parts of the Bible and always kept notes, as a former professor usually does. One of his favorites was: “Past is prologue.” His family and community will truly miss Eric.

— Rev Susan Jacobson



Levāivanu Karapani

March 25, 1945 – January 26, 2026



KARAPANI SR, MISIPATI (RL.08) California-Pacific 1978 PL; 78 (Olive UMC) (1/2); 82 (Jan 1) (Olive UMC) (3/4); 88 (Jun 20) (Olive UMC); 88 (Waianae UMC); 2008 Retired; 24 (Nov 24)

Deceased

Psalm 23

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul.
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear or no evil,
for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

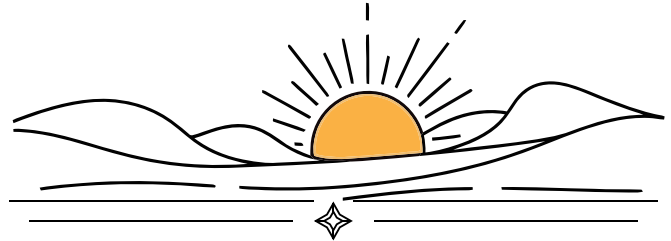
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

— Her Family



Diane Kenney

November 25, 1941-March 31, 2026



WEIST, DARELL THAYNE (T.61; F.65) Iowa; North Dakota; South Dakota; Nebraska; North Dakota; Nebraska; SCA 71 (Aug 1) UCR, Univ. Rel. Cen.; 73 GBGM, Missionary; 76 Tempe: First, Assoc. & Wesley Foundation; 77 PSW; 78 First UMC of Pasadena, Assoc; 81 CCOM, Assoc Council Director; 85 California-Pacific; L.A. District: Min. Resources, Director; 89 Los Angeles First UMC; 2005 (J344.1a) 1010 Development Corporation; 06 Retired; 2021 (Dec 10) Deceased

Patricia Diane Kenney was born to Thomas and Patricia Kenney. Raised an only child in Los Angeles, California, she attended Chapman College as an undergraduate and received her Master of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion. She was ordained to ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Diane's vocational commitments were captured in decades of work with students, faculty, staff, and members of the college and university communities.

In the late sixties, Diane worked at Stanford University as Assistant Dean in Memorial Church. There she coordinated the ecumenical campus ministers, assisted in Bible courses, organized programs, and worked with a series of interim deans.

Following her work at Stanford, Diane was an Underwood Fellow sponsored by the Danforth Foundation, with her work and research focused on liturgy and social change. Diane then began her lifelong vocational call to work on campuses, first at Mills College in Oakland, California, in the mid-seventies and then at Youngstown State University from 1977 to 1982 as the fulltime chaplain to the University, with time spent on organizing with the Mahoning Valley Council of Churches on justice issues affecting a steel town.

From Ohio, Diane took on the work of campus ministry at the University of Southern California from 1982, where she served for twenty-eight years. At USC, she founded "A Community Place," which partnered students with people in the community, working on issues of race, poverty, and hunger. Diane's gifts included that of liturgical leadership in ecumenical services, involvement with immigrant and with undocumented persons on campus, students, and staff.

She organized for several years an educational pilgrimage to Nicaragua to study the women organizers and immigration and justice issues. These trips included students and academic partners at the university in the 1990s.

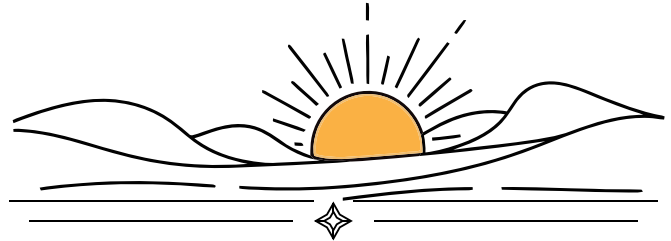
Diane and DarEll joined the community of Pilgrim Place in 2013. Diane was the organizer of monthly Thai dinners delivered initially during COVID to support a local business. She offered support, organization, and creativity for many events at Pilgrim Place. Her spirit of hospitality and welcome, organizational skills for events like the annual Fair, and her knowledge of the folks in Pilgrim Place will be deeply missed, along with all of her many gifts and graces.

— Jolane L. Weist



Sook Kyung Kim

August 26, 1933- April 13, 2026



KIM, YUNG CHOL (P.70; F.73) New Jersey; California-Pacific 85 Torrance: Hope; 95 Retired (J452.2c); 2018 (Sept 12) Deceased

Sook Kyung Kim was born on August 26, 1933, in Seoul, Korea, in a time when life in Korea was not easy. The time of her birth was during a politically divided time of cultural oppression under the Japanese Imperial occupation. She knew hardship, but she also knew the faithfulness of God.

By way of a one-month voyage, she moved to the US and studied at Azusa Pacific University, where she got her degree in Library Science and worked for the United States government for forty-three years. During that time, she met and married Reverend Yung Chol Kim on Dec. 23, 1967.

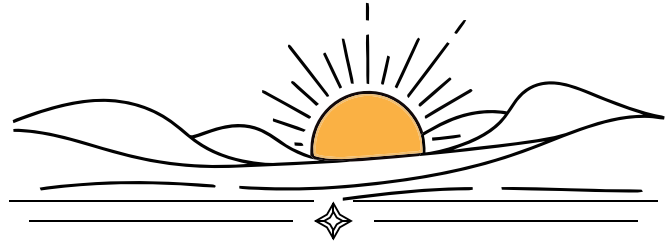
She continued her government job while they both served in the United Methodist Church until the last day of their lives. Sook went home to be with her Lord Jesus on April 13, 2026. She is survived by her children, Jane Moon, Jason Kim, Susan Kim, and seven grandchildren.

— Her children



Dorothy Knox

August 8, 1937 – September 19, 2025



KNOX, JOHN ROBERT (T.61; F.63) SCA 61 Arcadia: Church of Good Shepherd, Assoc; 64 La Cañada; 68 Ewa Beach; 72 Newport Beach: Newport Center; 77 PSW; 78 Corona: First; 79 Sabbatical Leave; 80 La Mirada; 85 California-Pacific; 87 La Habra; 99 (J355.2c) Retired; 2021 (Nov 15) Deceased

Dorothy Irene Steele was born to Berenice and W. Guy Steele, in Brea, California. The youngest of four, she grew up riding horses and climbing trees on the family ranch. She was the baby doll to big sister Mary (with whom she shared her birthday), a fellow adventurer to brother Bob, and she watched her big brother Bill go off to serve in WWII when she was 6 years old. She attended Fullerton Jr. College and the University of Redlands in pursuit of a teaching degree, where she met the love of her life, John Knox, who was studying to be a Methodist minister. They were married on December 18, 1959, and their marriage spanned just short of 62 years together.

John and Dorothy had three children: David G. Knox (René), Karen L. Garrett (Dave), and Bonne E. Bell (Ken); four grandchildren: Myka Knox (Jess), Kolya Knox, Joshua Bell, and Corinne Jones (Stuart); and two great-grandchildren: Aiden Knox and Reece Jones. Their lives were also blessed by 14 nieces and nephews. Living the life of an itinerant minister's family, they moved frequently around Southern California, plus four years in Hawaii. Everywhere they lived, Dorothy was active in ministry, supporting John and their churches by teaching, singing in the choir, playing handbells, leading small groups, and taking part in the United Methodist Women, among other duties.

They returned to her family home in Brea, California, when Berenice passed away in 1987 and John accepted an appointment at La Habra UMC. Aside from church activities, she was active in PEO, served as a trustee of the School of Theology at Claremont, led Girl Scouts, served Meals on Wheels, and was docent at the La Habra Children's Museum and La Habra Historical Museum, among many other activities.

Dorothy shared John's sense of adventure in traveling, sailing, even skydiving and doing loops in an antique biplane. She loved learning, delighted in nature - especially birds, loved her pets - especially her cats, and taught her children and grandchildren the same.

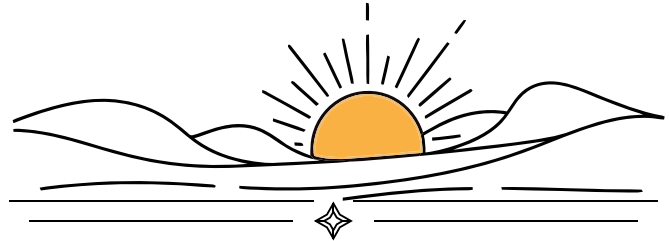
Dorothy and John were parted by his death on November 15, 2021. They were reunited in the house of our Lord on September 19, 2025.

— David Knox



Marjorie Koehler

October 1, 1929 – January 17, 2026



KOEHLER, GEORGE E. (T.54; F.59) SCA 54 Maynard Memorial, Minister of Education; 55 Inglewood: First, Minister of Education; 58 Coor. Council, Assoc Director of Youth & Student Work; L/A to Jan 1, 1959; 65 General Board of Education, Executive Secretary of Educational Development; 72 General Board of Discipleship, Asst. General Secretary on Local Church, Division of Education; 77 PSW; 78 General Board of Discipleship, Asst. General Secretary, Christian Education of Persons, Division of Education; 80 General Board of Discipleship, Director of Resource Development, Disc. Resources; 85 California-Pacific; 86 Retired per (J453.2c); 2019 (July 19) Deceased

Marjorie Rennebohm Koehler, known as Margie, was born in Madison, Wisconsin. Margie was predeceased by her husband, George E. Koehler; her parents; her brother and his wife; her sister, Winifred, and her husband; and her sister, Ruth, and her husband. High school sweethearts, Margie and George Koehler married in 1950. Both attended the University of Southern California. Their four children, cherished friends and supporters through the years, were born in or near Los Angeles. Margie moved with her family to Nashville in 1965.

In addition to raising four children, she was involved in P.E.O., read newspapers to the blind, taught swimming lessons, served as a Girl Scout leader and trained minority leaders, led Great Books discussions, worked for United Methodist Communications and in the testing departments for Peabody College and the Nashville Public Schools, was an active member of her children's PTAs, and helped settle and teach refugee families. Margie served as the Nashville coordinator for UNICEF's Trick-or-Treat program for almost thirty years. She was honored by Middle Tennessee's Council on Aging with its Sage Award in 2003.

Margie's interests included travel, both domestically and abroad (including multiple trips to her beloved Britain), birdwatching, reading, music, and volunteer work. She was deeply interested in family history. Margie kept the long trestle table full of delicious meals for gatherings, both large and small. Since 1965, Margie and George were active members of Calvary United Methodist Church in Nashville, where she taught Sunday School classes, was involved in United Methodist Women, book groups, Memorial Meals, Stephen Ministries, chaired various committees, played clarinet in the ensemble group, sang in the choir, and rang handbells.

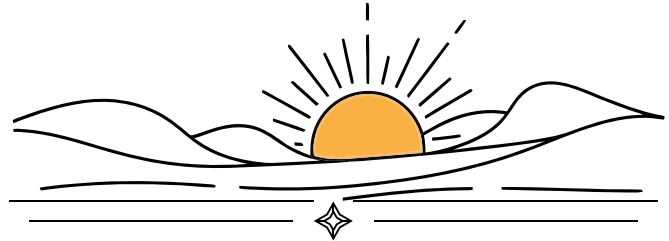
"Mimi" never missed an opportunity to celebrate a family birthday, anniversary, or graduation, and she faithfully cheered on children and grandchildren's teams at sporting events throughout the years. She died of natural causes with great appreciation expressed for her thoughtful caregivers.

— Her Family



Patricia Rose Locher

July 9, 1932 – July 19, 2025



LOCHER, DONALD R. (T.51; F.54) SCA 51 School; 54 West Covina; 61 LB: Los Altos; 65 Sup't., Phoenix Dist.; 71 Santa Barbara: First; PSW 77 Glendale: First; C-P 85; 86 Sup't. Santa Barbara Dist.; 92 Spec. Ass't to the President, School of Theology at Claremont, & Exec. Director, Pasadena Area Council of Churches, Pasadena; 92 (Sept. 1) R'd (¶451.2d) 96: Claremont School of Theology, Special Assistant to the President; 98 (Mar) (Temple City: First) 98 (Jul) R'd, 2006 (Feb 20) Died

Patricia Rose Locher lived shaped by compassion, gracious hospitality, family, friendship, music, and community. Born and raised in Glendale, California, she met her future husband through Methodist youth ministry in Pasadena. They shared a life of ministry, learning, music, and service throughout Southern California. Patricia loved her sister, Anne Snyder, who still resides in the Glendale/Pasadena area. Patricia started as a nurse at Los Angeles County Hospital. Alongside Don's ministry, she helped create homes and gatherings filled with conversation, hospitality, music, encouragement, and teddy bears.

The life of a pastor's wife and mother of four in those years was not always easy, yet Patricia brought warmth, resilience, creativity, and hospitality to it all. A gifted singer and choir member, Patricia loved literature, poetry, theater, and the arts. Later in life, she returned to college and earned two degrees, including a master's, reflecting her lifelong love of learning. She continued her own path through writing, script coverage work for the entertainment industry, and developing respected expertise in teddy bear history.

Patricia was rarely without the companionship of her beloved German Shorthaired Pointers, whose presence filled her homes, yards, and rested faithfully at her feet. Patricia took the greatest joy in the lives and achievements of her children, grandchildren, family, and friends. She would want this memorial to be more about her family and teachings than herself. She was proud of Mark Locher, entertainment scholar, actor, and Director of National Communications for the Screen Actors Guild; Deborah Locher, adoption & family counselor, scrapbooker, and child services advocate supporting police family services; Paul Locher, wonderful teacher, excellent coach, builder, entrepreneur, and avid sports fan; and John Locher, immersed across 11 Olympic Games, media and technology entrepreneur, Live Aid organizer, former 1984 LAOOC staff member, and continuing steward of Olympism and community.

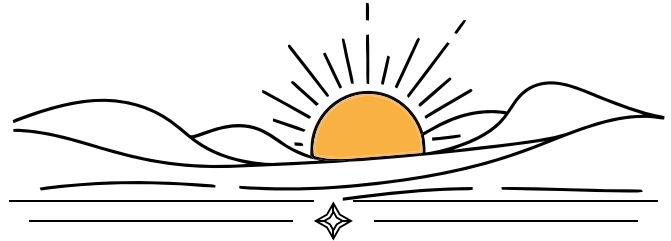
Patricia also deeply loved grandchildren Katherine, Elizabeth, Dawna, Lyn, and Jenner, and never held back giving them, and all family, life advice. Patricia taught her family and friends the importance of connection and honoring others through the joy of celebrating holidays, milestones, and special moments and with writing, gifts, cards, gatherings, and acts of kindness. Twenty-four hours before her passing, Pat dictated a list of family and friends she wanted thanked. Pat lit up every room with her smile, voice, wit, warmth, opinions, compassion, and love. She leaves a legacy through the many lives she nurtured, inspired, celebrated, and loved.

— John Locher



Lesapina Maile

August 22, 1948 – September 8, 2025



MAILE, TEVITA MOHI (PL.06; RL.18) California-Pacific 2006 PL; 2006 (Ala Lani UMC, Assoc for Tongan Ministry) (1/2); 09 (Ala Lani UMC, Assoc for Tongan Ministry) (1/2) & (Kihei Tongan UM Mission) (1/4); 12 (Honolua UMC) (3/4); 16 (Kahuku UMC) (3/4); 17 Medical Leave; 18 RL; 18 Retired; 21 (Sep 2) Deceased

Revelation 21:4

God will wipe every tear from their eyes.
There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain,
for the old order of things has passed away.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

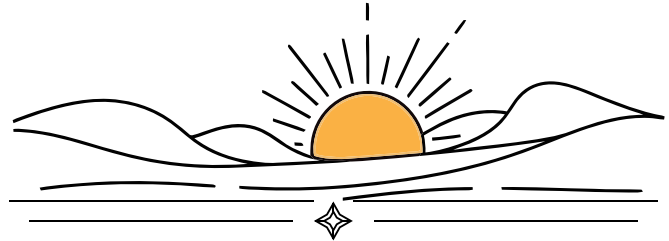
Brothers and sisters,
we do not want you to be uninformed about
those who sleep in death,
so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind,
who have no hope.

— Her Family



*Kathryn "Kathy" Klepper
Meier*

June 22, 1944 – August 26, 2025



MEIER, DONALD E. (T.61; F.63) SCA 61 School; 62 Escondido, First, Assoc.; 67 San Dimas; 69 School; 70 Torrance: Riviera, Assoc.; 71 V/L; 78 Readmitted, Needles; 83 LB: No. LB; C-P 85; 87 Placentia: Valencia; 90 Alhambra: Granada Park; 95 Inyokern & Randsburg; 98 Desert Hot Springs; 2000 R'd; 2001 Joshua Tree; 04 Retired

Kathryn "Kathy" Klepper Meier passed away Tuesday, August 26, 2025. Kathy was born in Upland to Bernard Klepper and Wilma Lewis Klepper. She received her bachelor's degree from San Diego State and her teaching credential from Northern Arizona University. Kathy was an active member of the United Methodist Church at the local, district, and conference levels. She always considered Ontario First United Methodist Church as her home church, where she was baptized, married, and eulogized.

Kathy married Reverend Donald Meier in June of 1966, and they were blessed with three sons. Together with Don, they served parishes throughout the western states, as well as time in Virginia. During her involvement in parish life, she held positions of church secretary, Sunday school teacher, and preschool director.

She also worked with District newsletters for Long Beach and Pasadena districts. Kathy taught home economics in Kingman, Arizona, and used these skills during fund raising for various camp and choir trip scholarship fund drives. Kathy and Don spent many years working with the Emmaus and Chrysalis communities.

Kathy's classes in Flagstaff led to hobbies in weaving, fabric dyeing, and other textile arts. She also loved to photograph nature. Don's African Violets and Easter Sunrise Service overlooking the Colorado River were two of her favorite subjects. After taking a banner making workshop, Kathy was quick to volunteer to build banners for programs from Advent Cantatas to handbell festival choir road trips.

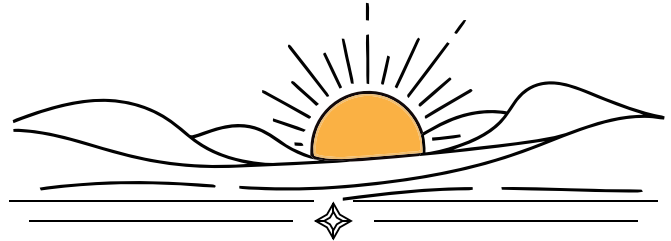
Kathy is survived by her sons Bill, Jim, and Rick; their families; and nephew Steve. She was blessed with five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

— Bill Meier



Petra Gerilla Movido

December 26, 1934 – November 11, 2025



MOVIDO, JOSE S. (P.74) Southern California-Arizona 74 School; 76 Los Angeles: Asbury; Pacific and Southwest 77; 78 (Jan. 1) Disability Leave; California-Pacific 8.S; 97 Retired

Heavenly Bliss

As we mourn your passing,

we find strength,

Knowing you now dwell in Heaven's length.

Your spirit shines brightly,

like a guiding star,

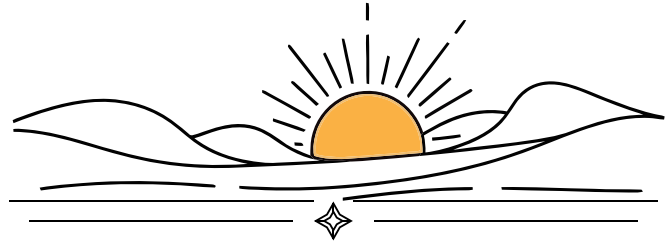
Leading us to joy even from afar.

— Online



Amelia (Lolohea) Namoa

May 19, 1961-December 2, 2025



NAMOA, TEVITA SITANILEI (LENI) (PL.99; LPA.22; PL.23; FL.24) California-Pacific 1999 PL; 99 (Kahului: Ala Lani, Assoc for Tongan Ministry) (3/4), 2006 (Waianae, Assoc) (1/2); 08 No Appt; 11 (Sep) PL; 11 (Sep) (Lihue United, Assoc) (1/2); 22 LPA; 22 (¶205.4) (Lihue United, Assoc) (1/2); 23 PL; 23 (Lihue United, Assoc) (1/2); 24 (Jan 1) FL; 24 (Jan 1) (Lihue United, Assoc)

Amelia Namoa of Lihue passed away on December 2, 2025, at the age of 64. She was born in Tonga on May 19, 1961, and was a pastor's wife. She was preceded in passing by her adopted father, Filisione Masita Taufahema; and her parents, Tupou and Losaline Lolohea.

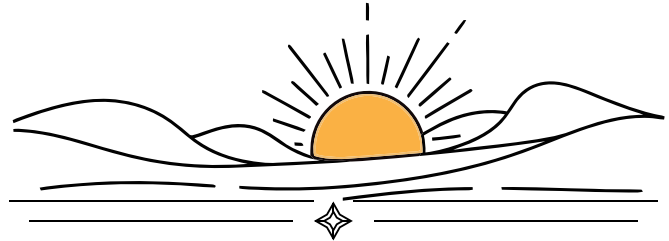
Amelia is survived by her loving husband, Pastor Tevita Lenipo Namoa; sons, Viliami Fatafehi Utoikamanu Namoa and Pastor Peasipa Taufahema Namoa; daughters, Ana Makaleinani Ngata, Losimani Manatukipulotu Namoa, Katalaine Leinaala Namoa, and Leslie Vaikauaki Namoa; adopted mother, Manisoula Taufahema; granddaughter, Amelia Phyllis Namoa; and numerous family members and friends.

— Her Family



Manukafoa "Tevita" Paongo

April 02, 1971- April 23, 2025



PAONGO, BRENDA KILIONI (PL.22) California-Pacific 2022 PL; 22 (Trinity UMC of Pomona) (1/4); 23 (Trinity UMC of Pomona) (1/4) & San Dimas UMC (1/4)

Manukafoa was born in Vaini, Tongatapu, to Malupo Kame Sefana Paongo and Fatima Tokomaata Paongo. He was raised up in his mother's village, Vaini, which deeply influenced his lifelong commitment to family and community. He attended Atele Sii and, later, his studies earned him a full scholarship to Liahona High School. He applied for and received permanent residence to travel and settle in Hawaii in December 2001.

He decided not to continue at Brigham Young University but to grow his gift in masonry and to support family. He met Brenda in Tonga in 2005 and married her in Hawaii on February 12, 2008. They were husband and wife for sixteen years. His family was strongly rooted in the Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints, yet he became a professing member of Waianae United Methodist Church in 2008.

They uprooted from Hawaii in 2017 and moved to California, so Brenda could attend seminary. Her ministry would lead their family to Pomona: Tongan United Methodist Church. He was a strong supporter of her calling and actively used his gifts of masonry, carpentry, and landscaping to help their work in ministry.

Manukafoa loved to travel and cook. He engaged in physical contact sports, especially rugby and football. He never passed an opportunity of an open table fellowship of Kava circles. He was quick with comebacks and favorite slogans. When it came to my human rights... His motto: No surrender. No Retreat.

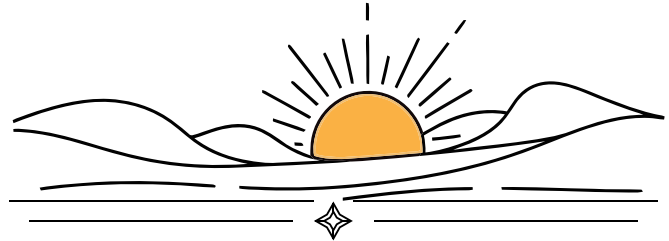
Manukafoa Paongo is survived by his wife, Brenda, and children: son Vainiaku Eliko Junior Paongo (17), daughter Latai Faleongo Gloria Paongo (15), son Hina Kilioni Paongo (10), and Asia Melaia Paongo (6).

— Brenda Kilioni



Jean Miles Price

December 26, 1945 - June 3, 2025



PRICE III, ROBERT PRESTON (PM.69; FM.72) SCA 1969 PM; 69 School; 70 La Jolla UMC, Assoc; 72 FM; 72 La Jolla UMC, Assoc; 73 Honokaa UMC; 76 SD: Rancho Bernardo; 77 PSW; 77 Hope UMC of San Diego; 85 California-Pacific; 85 La Mesa First UMC; 90 Santa Clarita UMC; 96 Garden Grove UMC; 2004 United UMC of Anaheim; 08 Retired

- Raised in Kansas, she had a strong identity with the life of pioneer Kansas women; sunflowers and wheat stocks were a constant presence in her home.
- A protective mother bear for every family member.
- A constant presence to her two sons and, later, her daughters-in-love and grandchildren.
- Never without at least one book near at hand.
- Eagerly willing to trade reading lists and loan books to others.
- Excellence was the minimum.
- No role or task performed half-heartedly.
- Slow to make friends; completely loyal once friendships were made.
- Never one to insinuate herself into a situation or opportunity.
- Organist par excellence. Associate Certification with the American Guild of Organists.
- Fine-tuned taste buds, but also willing to share a meal at McDonald's.
- Keen to ask questions and eager to learn about others' lives.
- Strong opinions about politics and the deepest of Biblical truths.
- Master educator at the high school level: remedial through AP; inaugural coordinator for the International Baccalaureate program.
- NCAA Basketball fanatic — always first: Kansas; every other team judged by the character of its coach.
- Reinvented herself with every move as an itinerant pastor's spouse, using or acquiring new skills as needed.

A story:

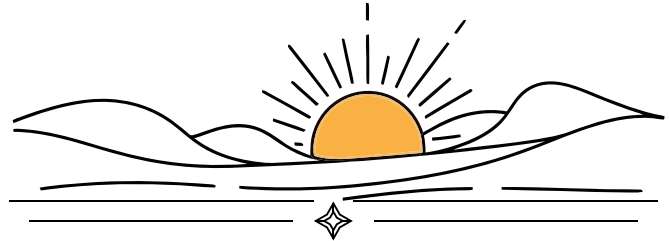
I was being interviewed by the Board of Ordained Ministry for Elders Orders. In those days, the spouse accompanied the candidate for the interview. Things were not going so well in the interview. It was noted that I had an F in a one-hour course in seminary. Near the end of the interview, one member of the interview team turned to Jean, saying, "Your dad was a DS; you've heard good preaching. What kind of a preacher is Preston?"

After a pause that was a little longer than was comfortable for me, she responded, "He's getting better." I am told the vote to approve was unanimous. I suspect it was because they knew I had someone by my side who knew I had a long way to go and would help me get there. And she did!

— Preston Price



Damaris Rodriguez
June 17, 1928 – December 4, 2025



RODRIGUEZ, BENJAMIN C. (T.60; F.64) SCA 60 School; 62 (May) LA: Florence Ave.; 67 Anaheim: El Sinai; PSW 77; 83 LA: La Plaza; C-P 85; 93 R'd (¶ 452.1); Deceased 10/9/2014

Damaris Rodriguez was born Damaris Camarena on June 17th, 1928, and was the oldest of 7 children. She grew up in Tucson, Arizona. She attended the University of Arizona in Tucson, where she studied in the medical field. She was a lab technologist for many years for various hospitals throughout Southern California.

She married Benjamin Rodriguez, who was a pastor in the United Methodist Church for many years. She had four children: Benny, Joel, Leland, and Joey.

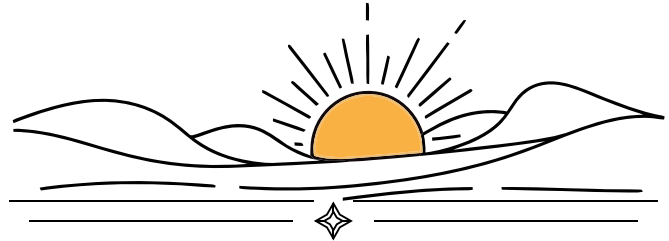
She loved to play the piano and was asked to play at various events throughout the United Methodist Church. She also loved traveling and traveled extensively with her parents throughout Europe, Israel, and other places.

She was beloved by her family, and we miss her. We look forward to being reunited with her and with God in heaven.

— Her Family



Ji Shik Ryu
September 24, 1929 - December 9, 2025



RYU, WON WHA LEE (P.87; F.91) C-P 87 North Hollywood: First, Assoc. (LFT); 89 LA: First Korean; 97 Retired

Prof. Ji Shik Ryu, born in Chuncheon, Korea, to a Methodist family during the Japanese colonial occupation (1910-1945), spent his childhood in Wonsan (now in North Korea), where his father taught at a Methodist mission school. While attending Kyungbok High School in Seoul, Korea was divided by the USA and USSR upon Japan's surrender on August 15, 1945. He and his immediate family were in the south of the division.

He studied at Kongju Teachers College (now Gongju National University) and Yonhee College (now Yonsei University). When the Korean War broke out (1950-53), he was drafted into the South Korean Army and fought on the front line as an artillery officer and interpretation officer against Koreans from the North. This first-hand experience of the atrocities and absurdity of war made him a pacifist.

During 1953-55, he was stationed in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, as part of an ROK-USA artillery officer exchange program. Upon returning, he became an instructor in mathematics and English at Korea Military Academy and got married to Won Wha Lee; together they shared their lives for the next 62 years and had four children.

In 1961, upon honorable discharge from the ROK Army as a Major, right before the May 16 Military Coup, he became a lecturer and then professor in the English Department at Yonsei University. During 1972-1974, his postgraduate study leave in Besançon and Paris, France, included teaching Korean language and literature at Université Paris VII Diderot in 1973-74. Upon returning to Yonsei, he continued teaching until 1977, when he immigrated to Los Angeles with his whole family.

In America, he supported the theological education, ordination, and ministry of his wife, Rev. Won Wha Lee Ryu, who became the lead pastor of a Korean congregation during 1989-1997, unusual then and still rare.

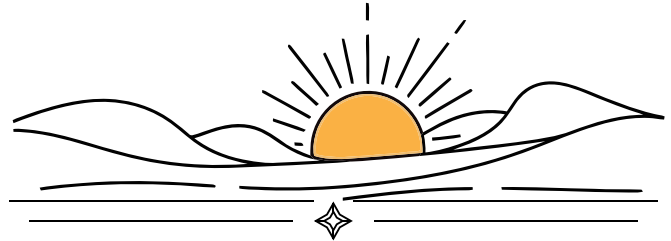
He worked as an Escort Interpreter with the US Department of State for over 20 years. After retirement, he continued to nurture his family, took care of his wife until her death in 2017, and guided his four now-adult children, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren, all of whom survive his death. He lived an active life until the last months of his life, enjoyed his time with his children until the last day of his life, fully conscious, and died peacefully of a natural death in his own bed on December 9, 2025, at 8:05 a.m., and joined his wife in the Lord.

— Rev. Charles Ryu, the third child



Shelley Wiggins

March 16, 1934 – July 25, 2025



WIGGINS, JR., CHARLES E. (T.56; AM 69) SCA 56 Sepulveda, Min. of Ed.; 57 Pas: Holliston Ave., Min. of Ed.; 61 Discontinued from on trial; 61 (Pas: Holliston Ave. Min. of Ed.); 63 (SD: St. Mark's, Assoc.); 69 Received as an Assoc. Mem.; SD: St. Mark's, Assoc.; 71 S.D.: Mid City Greater Parish, Albright; 76 Santa Monica, First, Assoc.; 96 Retired (J 452)

Endless Flowers Bloom

Like a flower that blooms and soon withers away,

Your life was a gift,

a brief moment to stay.

In God's loving embrace,

you find eternal rest,

Forever remembered as one of life's precious zest.

— Her Family