CALIFORNIA-PACIFIC ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

November 18, 2026

Dear California-Pacific Conference Family,

I write to you today following a decision by the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church regarding the closure of La Trinidad United Methodist Church in Los Angeles. The Council has affirmed my Decision of Law, and I am grateful for its careful consideration and for the processes of accountability that guide all of us, including me as your bishop. These processes help us make difficult decisions with care and faithfulness to our shared calling.

When a church closes, there is sadness. There are memories of baptisms, weddings, worship and generations of people who have called that place their spiritual home. We honor those memories and the faithful people who have been part of La Trinidad's long history.

As your bishop, I also carry the responsibility of looking toward the future of our ministry. Sometimes that requires difficult decisions. The decision regarding La Trinidad was not mine alone. It came through the shared leadership and accountability of our United Methodist connection, including our Cabinet, district leadership, consultation with our Hispanic committee and a vote of the Annual Conference. Throughout this process, our responsibility has been to protect the resources entrusted to our care and ensure that ministry continues in the community.

In East Los Angeles, a new chapter of hope is already taking shape.

Nueva Esperanza means *New Hope*. It is a name chosen by the people of this new worshiping community, including some who were part of La Trinidad and others who are joining in this new beginning. Under the leadership of Rev. Ruben Esponda, they are gathering for worship, building relationships and discovering what God has in store for them.

And there is more ahead. A development already underway will bring 60 affordable senior housing units to the neighborhood, along with a new worship space and places for gathering and serving the community. Resources designated for Hispanic ministry in East Los Angeles will help support this ministry as it grows.

I find myself returning to the words of Isaiah 58:8:

> *"Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly."*

What a beautiful promise for a community looking toward a new beginning. God's light is not limited by the difficulties we have experienced. God's healing and hope continue to find their way into our lives and our neighborhoods.

I am grateful for the people of Nueva Esperanza, for Rev. Esponda and for all those who have faithfully worked to ensure that United Methodist ministry continues in East Los Angeles.

My prayer is that we will continue moving forward together, with open hearts to see what God is doing among us today. There is much to be hopeful about, and there is much work still to do. May we embrace that work together, bringing God's light, healing and hope to the communities we are called to serve.

Grace y paz,

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank
Resident Bishop of the Los Angeles Episcopal Area

110 S. Euclid Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101
bishop@calpacumc.org