



# The Beacon

Inspiring the world as passionate followers of Jesus Christ so all may experience God's life-giving love

First United Methodist Church of Seal Beach

February 2026

## From Pastor Tia

Greetings Friends,

February is the month in which we begin the Lenten Season. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and goes for the next 40 days, not counting Sunday's, and ends on Holy Saturday right before Easter. This year Lent begins on Wednesday February 18<sup>th</sup>. To mark this occasion, we will be celebrating our traditional Ash Wednesday Hybrid Service at 7:00pm. The focus will be on how we will spend this time of repentance through scripture and song. The service will conclude with the imposition of Ashes.

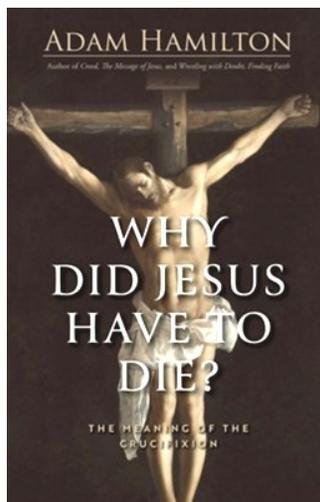
This year for lent I will be using Adam Hamilton's book "Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion." Here is a description of the book from the inside the jacket cover; *"Despite the crucifixion's central place in Christian faith, the New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus' death saves, or why, exactly, he had to die. The New Testament writers use a host of metaphors—ransom, sacrifice, reconciliation, victory—but never explain exactly how it works or why it had to happen this way. What if that's because we've been asking the wrong question? What if the cross isn't a transaction to be explained, but a living Word from God meant to transform who we are and how we live?"*

I am looking forward to exploring this book in my sermon series and in the Lenten Study which will be every Wednesday evening at 7:00pm on Zoom. The class will begin on

Wednesday, February 25. I hope you will join us for both the Sunday worship and Wednesday Bible Study.

Lent is an important season in the Christian year. It is a time to reflect and repent on the past year since Easter. It can be a time when we give something up that we enjoy as a sacrifice to show our commitment to Jesus. It can also be a time when we add a Spiritual Discipline to our daily acts of devotion. Whatever you choose to do I hope you will take these forty days of Lent as a time to renew and recommit yourselves to Jesus. And prepare your hearts and minds for the glorious day of resurrection, Easter.

Shalom,



If you would like to join the study you may purchase a book for yourself from Cokesbury or Amazon.

**In-Person & Virtual Worship Sundays**  
9:30am

**E-mail Prayer Chain**  
prayerchain@firstchurchsealbeach.org

**Tea Time Tuesdays**  
Tuesdays @ 3:00pm Zoom. Contact Pastor Tia if you'd like to attend.  
pastortia@firstchurchsealbeach.org.

**Men's Breakfast Group**  
Thursdays @ 7:30am @ Blackboard Bistro on PCH.

**Music Ministry**  
Trio & Choir rehearsal times vary. 8:30 & 11:30am. Beach Bells Tues. @ 5:45pm .  
Anjanette Navarro  
anjanette880@gmail.com.

**Mission Ministry Fellowship**  
Thurs. Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am. First Thurs. of the month.

**Women's Group**  
Mon. Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> @ 10:30am  
Meetings held as needed.

**Ad Council**  
Sat. Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am Hybrid

**Lunch Bunch**  
Wed. Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30am  
@ at John's Philly Cheese Steak on PCH.  
4<sup>th</sup> Wed of the month. All are welcome.  
Notify Jeanne if you'd like to join us.

**Miracle Prayer Group**  
Charlotta Butler (562) 431-8540

**Men's Breakfast Group**  
Thursdays @ 7:30am @ Blackboard Bistro



**Administrative Council Minutes - January 17, 2026**  
*by Greg Fellers (Dan Butler & Kathy Fellers)*

**Present:** Pastor Tia, Johnny Scott, Jay Bullock, Beth Barinek, Carolyn Nicks, Barbara Arnold, Debbie Hitchings, Greg & Kathy Fellers, Dan & Charlotta Butler.

Greg opened the meeting at 9:06 am. Jay led us in prayer.

**Welcome:** Greg welcomed new Council member Debbie Hitchings, our new Financial Secretary, and thanked everyone else who is returning for 2026. Since there is no Ad Council Secretary currently, Dan and Kathy have agreed to take notes and give them to Greg to compile into some minutes. Pastor Tia added that the Zoom recording might also be a way to get a summary of the meeting.

**Minutes:** Kathy shared the minutes of the Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Jay moved approval, Barbara seconded, and it passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> financials prepared by Johnny were reviewed. Actual YTD income was \$367,683, with YTD expenses at \$348,973. This leaves a surplus of \$18,709. It was noted that we withdrew about \$10,000 less than anticipated from investments and still ended up in the black. Overall, 2025 was a good year. It also noted that donations for the music ministry were strong at the end of the year. A lengthy discussion around special mission income and expenses occurred as it is confusing to try to follow

in the treasurer's report line items. This was especially true of amounts collected and distributed for the LA fires and for Interval House. It was agreed that all special donations for missions and other projects be lumped under a Designated Restricted fund, with a corresponding expenditure under Non-Budgeted expenses. Since these are in and out items, they should not be reflected in our treasurer's report of budgeted items.

**Endowment and Investment Committee:**

Pastor Tia reviewed the totals as of January 15, 2026:

	1/15/25
Endowments:	\$76,447 up 12.53%
for 2025	\$84,743
Memorials & Bequests	
	\$115,651
up 12.62% for 2025	\$127,844
Jubilee Fund:	\$507,616
up 12/99% for 2025	
	\$588,367
Total Investment	\$699,715
up 12.87% for 2025	\$801,415

**2026 Budget Workshop:** Worksheets showing 2025 budgeted, 2025 actuals and 2026 proposed for each line item were prepared by Pastor Tia and distributed via email prior to the meeting.

Income: the amount for pledges and contributions is about \$25,000 less than 2025 actual, but about \$3000 more than 2025 budgeted, so we'll be optimistic.

Facilities usage income was decreased because we only have one morning user group now.

Expenses: Beth reported that Pastor Tia has requested a spiritual renewal leave for 2 months, May and June. The motion from SPPRC to approve this leave was approved unanimously. The Pastoral compensation package had been previously approved at Charge Conference.

SPPRC recommended that staff not receive an hourly raise this year so the 2025 budgeted amounts were used for 2026, except that Jeanne's compensation will decrease about 25% due to her reduction in hours. The amount for substitute staffers was adjusted to include the anticipated cost of substitute preachers during Pastor Tia's leave.

All the rest of the expense line items were discussed, and an appropriate amount budgeted. There was a lengthy discussion around advertising and where our money is being spent and what the targeted audience should be. It was agreed to increase this line item slightly and investigate the use of more social media outlets.

Budgeted expenses came to a total of \$300,265 with budgeted income at 147,681. This leaves an amount of \$152,585 that will have to come out of investments. It was agreed to budget the withdraw of \$18,000 from Endowments, \$25,000 from Memorials and Bequests, and \$110,000 from Jubilee.



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Admin Council Minutes</b> <i>Cont. from page 2</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Missions</b> <i>by Carolyn Nicks</i></p>
<p>A motion to approve the 2026 annual budget of \$361,681 was made by Beth, seconded by Carolyn, and was approved unanimously.</p> <p>A motion to approve the 2026 annual budget of \$361,681 was made by Beth, seconded by Carolyn, and was approved unanimously.</p> <p><b>MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS:</b></p> <p><b>Trustees:</b> The mini-split heating system in the sanctuary was repaired for a total cost of \$400.</p> <p><b>Worship:</b> Charlotta reported that sanctuary colors were changed to green after Epiphany Sunday.</p> <p><b>Missions:</b> Carolyn shared that there is currently a fundraiser for a friend of Anjanette's who is a single mother with significant needs. Souper Bowl Sunday is February 8<sup>th</sup> with donated funds going to a designated special mission.</p> <p><b>Women's Group:</b> Kathy Fellers reported that they are transitioning to a new format. Although they will make a pledge to the Conference UWF, they have not decided their official status as yet. Their next meeting will be Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. Charlotta and Debbie will be co-chair of the Mothers and Others Tea.</p> <p><b>Lay Leader Report:</b> Barbara reported that she received many positive comments on the Christmas Eve service as well as the Christmas sermon series. Also, the water passed out during</p>	<p>the Christmas Parade was much appreciated.</p> <p><b>Pastor's Report:</b> Pastor Tia appreciated the opportunity for spiritual renewal. She will be lining up guest preachers for that time. She will be available for any congregant emergencies but will not be involved in day-to-day church business, conducting bible study or attending meetings.</p> <p><b>New Business:</b> Greg shared that H4H of Greater LA has a Build for Unity event in Long Beach February 6-7<sup>th</sup>. Information for the event will be on the bulletin board table.</p> <p><b>Next meeting:</b> We will skip February. Greg will send out the January 31 financials when he gets them from Johnny. The next meeting will be March 14<sup>th</sup> (hybrid).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opening Prayer:</b> Greg <b>Closing Prayer:</b> Carolyn</p> <p>Charlotta led us in the closing prayer.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned: 10:50 am</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Upper Room Available</b></p> <p>The daily devotional <i>Upper Room</i> is available. They do enrich your life. If you would like one mailed to you please contact the office.</p>

February 8, 2026 Mark the date Souper Bowl Sunday will be celebrated at First Church on Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>. Traditionally, homemade soup will be served celebrating the end of the football season. Hopefully you will participate in enjoying the soups with your church family before the big game.

Sack lunches are still a favorite treat for our homeless. Thank you to all that have donated and help prepare the lunches. We will continue feeding those that are in need with YOUR help.

Since Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> we have given out the following to our "guests"

53 Lunches  
12 Gift bags with pair of socks  
10 Pairs of socks

Thank you for the many donations of socks we received. We will continue to give out a couple of pairs of socks with lunches.



 <b>JOYS &amp; CONCERNS</b> <b>Jan. 25, 2026</b>	<b>Habitat LA Sponsors</b> <b>Build for Unity</b>	<b>Events</b>
<p>Please pray for Barbara A's sister in New York she lives on the third floor and can walk out on here balcony into the snow. Keep all those who are struggling through these storms in our prayers.</p> <p>Greg G's brother Mark has Parkinson's please pray for him &amp; his continued healing and his perseverance.</p> <p>Debbie's friends, Kim &amp; Laurie's oldest son, Marty passed away on Jan. 19. Please keep the family in your prayers.</p> <p>Pray for our country. Many of us, our hearts are breaking. It doesn't matter where we are but as Christians we need to be reminded that we all are God's children.</p> <p>Pray for Mike &amp; Joyce's friends in Ohio and the Carolinas who are dealing with the storms.</p> <p>One of Anjanette's kindergarten students told Anjanette that she went to her little brother's funeral. Pray for her and her family.</p>	 <p>The first week of February is World Interfaith Harmony Week.</p> <p>Habitat for Humanity of Great Los Angeles is encouraging volunteers of all beliefs and backgrounds to help make a difference and build critically needed affordable housing in Long Beach.</p> <p>Build for Unity is an opportunity to come together, no matter what your skill level or spiritual background, and roll up your sleeves to promote positive, interfaith impact and unity in our great Los Angeles community.</p> <p>The build days in Long Beach will be February 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup>. There is more detailed information about this event on the table under the bulletin board in our Fellowship Hall. For more information and for details about joining, contact Chris Untiet at <a href="mailto:chrisu@habitatla.org">chrisu@habitatla.org</a>.</p>	 <p><b>In-Person &amp; Virtual Worship</b> Sundays 9:30am.</p>  <p><b>Tuesdays Tea Time</b> 3:00pm Zoom Tuesday is a time to join together to chat and catch up. Pastor Tia will send out the Zoom invite each week, please contact Pastor Tia if you would like to join.</p>  <p><b>Men's Breakfast Group</b> Thursdays 7:30am Men's fellowship group meets for breakfast every Thursday at Blackboard Bistro on PCH.</p>  <p><b>Bible Study 7:00pm Zoom</b> <b>Jesus &amp; Prayer</b> Wed. Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 11<sup>th</sup></p>  <p><b>Mission Ministry Fellowship</b> Thurs. Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am</p>  <p><b>Women's Group</b> Mon. Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> @ 10:30am</p>
<p><b>Joys</b></p> <p>Barbara went through her MRI with no issues. No results yet, pray that this gives them come clarity.</p> <p>Joyce thanks everyone for your prayers, she was going through long tests. The tests came back with favorable results.</p> <p>Leslie G's friend, Lee who she knows from the Dog Park, had fallen and had a brain bleed. Lee is home with his dog.</p>	<p><b>February Birthdays</b></p> <p>Mia Lopez Joyce Strawn Donna Carnegie Joy Rosen Kristen Butler Ave Lopez Judy Peterson</p>  <p><b>February Anniversary</b> 8<sup>th</sup> - Darrel &amp; Linda Stoskopf</p> 	<p><b>March Beacon</b> <span style="background-color: yellow; padding: 2px;">DEADLINE</span> Mon. Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 11:00am</p>  <p><b>Lunch Bunch</b> Wed. Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30am @ John's Philly Cheese Steak All are welcome. Contact Jeanne if you'd like to join us.</p>  <p><b>Lenten Bible Study</b> <b>7:00pm Zoom</b> Starts Wed. Feb. 25<sup>th</sup></p> <p><b>Admin. Council</b>  Sat. March 14<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am</p>  <p><b>Office Closed</b> Mon. Feb. 16<sup>th</sup></p>



Life at First Church

Finance Report as of January 20, 2026

	Monthly	Year to Date	Budget Year to Date
	1/1/26-1/20/26	1/1/26-1/20/26	1/1/26-1/20/26
Income Totals	13,898.00	13,898.00	25,056.00
Expense Totals	17,068.51	-22,967.00	25,802.00
Difference	-3,170.51	36,865.00	-746.00



February Sermon Series  
"Jesus & Prayer"

February 2026 Worship  
Schedule

In-Person Worship 9:30am  
Streaming live on Facebook

Sunday Worship Services 9:30am

February 1<sup>st</sup>  
Communion  
John 2:1-12

"Everyday Epiphanies -Catch New  
Wine at the Wedding"

February 8<sup>th</sup>  
Luke 6:17-49

"Everyday Epiphanies – Turning the  
World Upside - Down"

February 15<sup>th</sup>  
Transfiguration Sunday  
Matthew 17:1-8

"Everyday Epiphanies – Wake Up to  
Glory"

February 18<sup>th</sup>  
Ash Wednesday 7:00pm  
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

"Patience, Kindness, Genuine Love"

February 22<sup>nd</sup>  
1st Sunday of Lent  
Luke 22:63-71  
"Trials"

Rev. Tia Wildermuth, Pastor



February Altar Flowers

- Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> — Open
- Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> — Jeanne in memory of brother Jack.
- Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> — Dan & Charlotta in honor of Kristen's Birthday 2/16
- Feb.. 22<sup>nd</sup> — Open

If you'd like to provide flowers on Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> to honor someone or an event, or in memory of someone please sign-up on the Flower Calendar on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. You can also call or email; office@firstchurchsealbeach.org and state it's in honor or in memory of a special person or occasion. Your gift of flowers for the altar on Sunday morning really adds beauty and meaning to our services.

The 2026 Flower calendar is on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

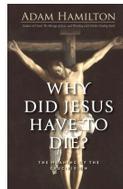
Bible Study

Jesus & Prayer  
Last session is Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>

Lenten Bible Study

Starts Wed. February 25<sup>th</sup>

We will be using Adam Hamilton's book "Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion."



Ash Wednesday  
February 18<sup>th</sup> 7:00pm

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the 40 day season of Lent—a season of preparation to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter. Counting back 40 days from Easter - excluding Sundays which are days of celebration and feasting—we arrive at the Wednesday seven weeks before Easter.

**First United Methodist  
Church Seal Beach**

148 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Seal Beach, CA 90740-6421  
First United Methodist

**February 2026**

Phone: (562) 431-0494

Office Hours: M-F, 10:00am-2:00pm

Web site: [www.firstchurchsealbeach.org](http://www.firstchurchsealbeach.org)

Email: [Office@FirstChurchSealBeach.org](mailto:Office@FirstChurchSealBeach.org)

March 2026 Beacon Deadline

**DEADLINE**

11:00am Fri. Feb. 20th

Beacon Editor: Jeanne Mignacca

Rev. Tia Wildermuth

[pastortia@firstchurchsealbeach.org](mailto:pastortia@firstchurchsealbeach.org)

Mobile 562-234-0641

**In-Person and  
Streaming Live**

First Church Sunday worship service is streaming live on Facebook. You can find us @ [facebook.com/firstsealbeach/](https://www.facebook.com/firstsealbeach/). Or go to our website, scroll to the bottom right & click on  Space is available for comments.