



# Good News



**Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church**  
**A United Church of Christ**  
 Sr. Pastor Rev. Mitchell Young  
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 (323) 721-5568 MontebelloUCC.org

**April 2026**  
*Volume XLV No. IV*



*"Peace be with you."* **John 20:19**

**Peace Be with Us All**

As we rapidly come to the end of our Lenten season toward Holy Week and Resurrection Day, I invite you to picture a scene from that day of Christ's resurrection. The doors are locked. The disciples are hiding behind them, paralyzed by fear, doubt, and the trauma of a brutal Good Friday. They are trapped in a space of anxiety, uncertain of what comes next. And yet, into that room of locked hearts and locked doors, Jesus enters.

He does not offer a word of rebuke for their abandonment. He does not demand praise for his victory. Instead, his very first words are, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19). When Jesus says, "Peace be with you," he is offering more than a casual greeting; he is imparting a profound spiritual gift rooted in the Hebrew concept of shalom (שָׁלוֹם) which signifies wholeness, completeness, and a restored relationship with God. This phrase, used prominently after his resurrection, serves as an assurance of his victory over death and sin, providing comfort to followers in times of distress and fear.

In the face of a broken world that often feels much like that locked room, I want us to reflect on what this peace truly means.

We begin by remembering that peace is not a prize. There are times when we treat peace as if it were a trophy—a coveted prize to be won after a long competition. And if the prize of recognition is awarded so someone else is less deserving, we feel no obligation to think purely of peace anymore but turn back to our own self-interests. At other times, we treat peace as "stillness"—the ab-

sence of conflict, or the "me-time" we grab while the rest of the world burns.

But the peace Jesus brings on Easter is not "as the world gives" (John 14:27). The peace Jesus brings is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of the Resurrected One in the midst of trouble. Jesus speaks peace while showing them the wounds in his hands and side. Christ's peace is a wounded peace—one that acknowledges the trauma but refuses to be defeated by it.

Immediately after offering his peace, Jesus says: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). At this point, peace and peacemaking becomes the calling of everyone who would follow the Risen Christ. The peace of Christ is not meant to be kept in a locked room; it is meant to be passed on. It is a commission to become agents of reconciliation in a divided, fearful, and often violent world.

When we say to one another, "Peace be with you," we are not merely offering a polite greeting; we are committing to a way of life that breaks down the walls of hostility. It is a calling to: forgive as we have been forgiven, build solidarity, and move beyond our fears. The resurrection proves that no door is too tightly locked—whether it be a room, a heart, or a nation—that Jesus cannot enter.

This Easter, I encourage you: do not settle for a quiet, comfortable peace that ignores the suffering of our neighbors. Instead, receive the breath of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22) and go forth as wounded healers—people who know pain but carry the message of healing.

May we take our commission seri-

ously: to live out our faith not through domination or vengeance, but by passing on the peace of Christ in every act of love, every gesture of mercy, and every moment of reconciliation. Happy Easter!

In the Risen Christ,  
 Pastor Mitchell

**Worship Schedule**

**April 2**

Maundy Thursday  
 "An Example"  
 John 13:1-17; 31b-35

**April 3**

Good Friday  
 at San Marino UCC  
 "No King But Caesar"  
 John 18:1-19; 42

**April 5**

Easter Sunday  
 "They Left the Tomb"  
 Matthew 28:1-10

**April 12**

"So I Send You"  
 John 20:19-31

**April 19**

Pulpit Swap: Rev. Dr. Art Cribbs, Jr.  
 "Going On"  
 Luke 24:13-35

**April 26**

Good Shepherd Sunday  
 "By the Gate"  
 John 10:1-10

**A Message from our Moderator...***Lori Katayama*

Holy Week is upon us. I hope and pray that you will join us for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday (at San Marino UCC), and Easter Sunday.

We are so grateful for the new board members who have volunteered to serve after our plea for help in January. For C.E. board: Joan Pablico and Ashley Pablico and Diaconate board: Ramon Pablico. There are still some positions on the C.E. board that are waiting to be filled.

We are seeking a volunteer co-chair for the bazaar which is scheduled for June 6th. If you would like to help please contact Lynne Hanamoto.

Most churches rely heavily on volunteers as we do to fill their boards to keep the church running. Many churches, however, use a bookkeeper for their finances so we are considering it for the future. If you know of a reasonable bookkeeper who may be interested please have them contact me.

**A Message from our Treasurer...***Bien Reyes***Financial Summary - February 2026**

	Month	YTD
<b>Total Income:</b>	\$25,053.00	\$40,030.09
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	\$25,217.83	\$44,559.17
<b>Surplus/(Deficit):</b>	(\$164.83)	(\$4,529.08)

Our total from the baked goods and bento fundraiser was \$3,090.00. Thank you all who supported our winter fundraisers for MPCC!

**Bazaar 2026***Lynne Hanamoto, chairperson*

Our Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church's 67th Annual Bazaar will take place on Saturday, June 6.

We will look forward to having pre-ordered Bentos again and will sell pastries, Spam Musubi and hopefully some "old" bazaar food favorites returning.

For entertainment, the wonderful Halaus have been invited and I am awaiting confirmation.

If you are interested in being on MPCC's Bazaar Planning Committee, please let me know, as I cannot be Bazaar chair on my own. Looking forward to some fresh ideas, and to make this a wonderful event, for Pastor Mitchell's last Bazaar. A committee will surely

make our bazaar run easily. Hope you will want to serve with a Grateful Heart with me!

**Christian Education Board***Steven Woo, chairperson*

Hi Everyone,

Easter is coming up and as per usual the C.E. board will have an Easter egg hunt after service on April 5. We will have a lot of eggs so bring your kids, grand-kids, friends, etc.

Next month, we will have our graduation recognition on May 31. For our high school and college graduates, please submit your grad bio (school name, achievements, future plans, etc.) by May 10 so we can celebrate your graduation with our church family. Let us know if you have any questions.

**Diaconate Board***Lynne Hanamoto*

Pastor Mitchell is preparing the Diaconate Board to become knowledgeable about our UCC Worship resources. He shared the UCC Liturgical colors and calendar so that we can prepare our sanctuary for our Worship Services.

During the month of March, our Lenten Offering to the UCC One Great Hour of Sharing provided support to the Disaster, refugee, and development ministry.

On March 29th Palm Sunday service, we were blessed to have guest speaker Rev. Keith Hirata from Union Church, LA.

For our Special Easter Services with San Marino UCC: On April 2nd, MPCC will host San Marino Congregational for Maundy Thursday Soup and they will join us in the Maundy Thursday Service at MPCC. On April 3rd, we will drive to San Marino Congregational Church for a joint Good Friday Service.

Looking ahead to May:

- May 3rd: PAAM Sunday Potluck and join us for our PAAM Sunday Worship Service.

- May 10th: Mother's Day breakfast. If you would like to help, please let Ron Nitta know.

**Wednesday Group***Art Hanamoto*

**2/11/2026** Terry H., Suzy H., Kiku K., Ed Y., Alice H., Ernie A., June Y., Jean K., Christine K., Lynne H., and Pastor Mitchell folded, labeled, and mailed the Good News publication.

**3/11/2026** Nitaya Y., Christine K., Alice H., Ernie A., Joe P., and Art H. 1) worked on creating a new

Easter banner (stenciled letters and doves on to a felt, cut out the patterns, and sewed the banner, 2) filled a gap in the glass door entrance to the Sunday School wing, 3) organized items in the kitchen cabinets and drawers, 4) removed overgrown succulents in Angel lot, and 5) tried to fix the inside lock on the door near the Mori Hall kitchen. The lock is too worn-out to repair and needs to be replaced.

**3/18/2026** Alice H., Ernie A., Nitaya Y., Pastor Mitchell, Lynne H. and Art H. 1) trimmed and glued cut out letters and felt patterns to the new Easter banner, 2) sorted clergy stoles to prepare for the PAAM pulpit exchange, 3) selected items to donate from the giveaway table in Mori Hall, 4) arranged items in the kitchen cabinets and drawers, 5) trimmed the trees in the Los Angeles parking lot, 6) hosed down the lanai and sanctuary steps, and 7) continued removal of the overgrown ice plants in Angel lot.

**Pastor Mitchell's Farewell**

Please save these important dates leading up to Pastor Mitchell and family's departure.

**April 5** - Pastor Mitchell's last Easter Celebration at MPCC. Worship with us at 10am.

**April 25 (Saturday)** - The "Grateful in All Things" Tea with guest of honor Nitaya Young and family. Tea begins at 11am.

**June 6 (Saturday)** - Pastor Mitchell's last Bazaar at MPCC. Join us for a fun day of food and entertainment. Please contact Lynne Hanamoto to pre-order food.

**July 11 (Saturday)** - MPCC's Annual Church Picnic will feature one of Pastor Mitchell's favorites - the taco man. More details to follow.

**July 26** - Pastor Mitchell's last day preaching from the pulpit. A potluck luncheon will follow immediately following worship.

**August 2** - Pastor Mitchell's Farewell Party will begin at 3pm with a special service in the Fukushima Chapel followed by a catered meal. RSVP is required. More info to follow.

**Special Offerings and Gifts**

Cambell, Susan	Pastor Mitchell's Retirement
Castanares, Mario & Anna Marie	Special Offering
Chun, Chris	In Memory of Meg Hamabe
Hino, Glenn & Tomoko	In Memory of Meg Hamabe
Kawamura, Robert & Karen	In Memory of Meg Hamabe
Kobata, Jean	In Memory of Meg Hamabe & John Franson
Mori, Ann	In Memory of Meg Hamabe
Murakami, Irene	In Memory of Mits M.
Tsunekawa, Jean	Grateful In All Things Tea
Yano Family	Cookie Walk Fundraiser
Yoshimi, Evelyn	In Memory of Meg Hamabe

**Blast from the Past!**

Here's a photo of Pastor Mitchell with our Sunday School children for Palm Sunday back in March 20, 2016 with the Blue Box! (10 years ago!)

Do you recognize the children? Most of them are young adults now!

Share your memories of Pastor Mitchell with us throughout his 20-yr ministry with us.



**Prayers of the People****With deepest sympathy to the family/families of:**

- Jenny W.'s family, the husband of Jenny's sister Ling has passed. Praying for peace for the family during this very difficult time.
- Let us keep Meg Hamabe's family in prayer for comfort and strength.
- Toni M.'s sister Elena who passed away. We pray for comfort and strength for Elena's family.
- For the family of Marc U. who passed away in Ohio last Sunday from brain cancer. We pray for comfort and strength for Marc's family.
- Sympathy and comfort for the Uyesugi family in the passing of cousin Allan.
- For Kuulei and Ted P. as they mourn the passing of Nohea, their beloved dog.
- Maria M.'s neighbor Victor who passed due to a heart attack, for Robert C. former CEO who passed away on March 9, and for our dog Boy who passed away from cancer.
- Sandra L.'s mother Jean F. who passed away on March 16 on late Monday morning.

**Prayers of Healing, Comfort and Blessing for:**

- We continue to lift up prayers for strength and health for our sons and daughters: Warren H., Bryan H., and Natasha Y.
- Jan F.'s prayers for Emme who has returned home after a stroke. Prayers for his continued health and healing.
- Joe P.'s prayers for Joe's daughter's friend Gabriel A. who has stage 4 lung cancer. We pray for Gabriel's comfort and strength. Also, healing for Rose L. who is dealing with intestinal infection.
- Lynne H. and Alex H.'s prayers for peace in the world.
- Annie Y.'s prayers of healing for Ron N. for his wrist.
- Ann S.'s prayers of healing for mother Mari who has a big skin wound on left arm and a bruise on lower leg.
- Sandra L.'s prayers of recovery for nephew Zachary who got an allergy to Nigerian food and went to the ER. Prayers for husband Chris who hurt his back doing yard work. For son Davy who is away in camp and for son Daniel's friend, Kirk who is a marine and is currently serving in Japan.
- Maria M.'s prayers for church members that can't make it to church in person, especially for Rev. Michio and wife Helen O. and Ben and Carol F. Also, prayers for husband Raul M. who found a new job.
- Kiku Y.'s prayers for the Leal family who has the flu and Mari asking for prayers for her father Jose who has health issues.
- Frank M.'s prayers for all the families and friends who are in Hawaii, specially in the island of Oahu.

**Thanksgiving:**

- Maria M.'s prayers of thanksgiving for the safe return of Nitaya and Natasha after being in Hawaii for two weeks.
- Nitaya Y.'s prayers of thanksgiving for her car that is working and running normal.
- Carolyn W.'s thanksgiving prayers for Michi T. who is back to church.

**Traveling Mercies:**

- Ivonne P.'s prayers for grandchildren Zora and Asa who are returning from spring break.
- Toni M.'s prayers for granddaughter Samantha who is traveling to Colorado with high school friends.
- Melody T.'s son Justin who is traveling from Taiwan back to the Philippines.
- Carolyn W.'s son, Marc who will be flying from Japan to Los Angeles this week and flying back to Japan in April. Travel mercy for granddaughter, Ashley, who will be flying home for spring break. Also, for son, Keith and coworkers as they fly to Washington DC for a conference.
- Travel mercy for Margaret and Jesse E. who will be traveling to Japan.
- Beverly Y.'s prayers for Kay S. who will be traveling to Hawaii from March 29 to April 1.

**April  
Birthday  
Celebrations**

- 1** Rumi Kwon
- 2** Grant Kawaharada
- 3** Jocelyn Yamasaki-Kwon
- 4** Kurt Sakamoto
- 5** Masao Sato
- 6** James Yoshitake
- 7** Gemma Iwata
- 9** Tom Fujita
- 9** Todd Yoshitake
- 12** Jesse Endo
- 13** Zora Phillips
- 13** Asa Phillips
- 15** Jan Fukushima
- 17** Kuni Kanegae
- 17** Susie Pham
- 22** Kelsie Reger
- 23** Jack Kaneoka
- 23** Kisa Sato
- 25** Steven Woo
- 27** June Fujita
- 30** Liane Petersen

**NOTE:**

**For prayer requests in the month of April e-mail Pastor Mitchell at [myoung@montebelloucc.org](mailto:myoung@montebelloucc.org) or call (323) 893-2672 by the Friday before the Sunday service to be included in the Pastoral Prayer.**

**Save Used Stamps Update  
"Thank You"**

*SAVE those stamps (even pre-sorted stamps are accepted)!*

*I will cut them for you and please leave at least 1/8 inches on the edges.*



*Thank you to all who have diligently collected used stamps. I greatly appreciate your time and effort.*

*After Japan receives the stamps, it is sold to collectors. With that money, aides are sent to countries in need.*

*Our goal at MPCC is to help the church, community, and other nations collectively with other UCC churches collecting "used stamps", we can make a difference! - Evelyn Yoshimi*



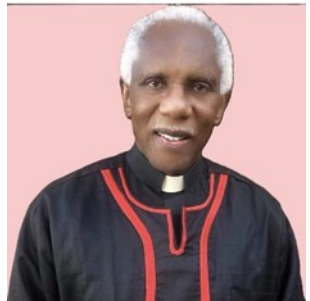
**Easter Lilies**

This year our deacons intend to share resurrection joy with a few people in our church who could use some resurrection hope at Easter. We are looking for sponsors for Easter Lilies at \$25 per plant. Contact our Diaconate board chair Nitaya Young for details. Help us share the joy of Easter!

**Montebello Plymouth and Christian Fellowship Congregational "Pulpit Swap" April 19, 2026**

**Pulpit Swap preacher: Rev. Dr. Arthur L Cribbs, Jr.**

Rev. Dr. Arthur "Art" Lawrence Cribbs, Jr. is the Senior Pastor of the Christian Fellowship Congregational Church, United Church of Christ (UCC) in San Diego, CA. Prior to joining the Christian Fellowship congregation in October 2023, he served as the intentional interim senior pastor of Little River UCC, Annandale, VA for 2021 - 2023. Between 2017 – 2020, he was the senior pastor of Los Angeles Filipino American UCC. Rev. was the Senior Pastor of San Marino Congregational Church, UCC between 2011-2017. While there, Rev. Cribbs founded the church's Community Outreach Foundation, started refugee and immigrant outreach for Sudanese and Somali families, and produced and hosted the television special, "Stories of the Soul: Life after 9/11," for which he received an Emmy Award. Welcome back to MPCC, Pastor Art!



*(Pastor Mitchell will be preaching at Christian Fellowship Congregational on April 19.)*



*The Grateful in All Things Tea*

Date: April 25th, 2026 Saturday  
 Time: 11am to 1:30pm  
 Cost: \$15 per person  
 Guest of Honor is Nitaya Young

Please sign up in Mori Hall if you have not been assigned a table yet. Deadline is April 12.

**3K Cookie Walk Fundraiser**

**March 15, 2026**  
**3K Cookie Walk Fundraiser for Summer Ex and our walkers**  
**stopping by Venecia Bakery for a treat**



**Thank you to our bakers,  
walkers, and for everyone  
that supported our Summer Ex fundraiser! We  
raised \$700!**



**Sun**

**Mon**

**Tue**

**Wed**

**Thu**

**Fri**

**Sat**

			<b>1</b> <b>Wednesday Group @8am</b> *Dance Class @7pm	<b>2</b> Maundy Thursday Service @7pm (soup served @6pm)	<b>3</b> Good Friday Service at San Marino UCC @7pm	<b>4</b>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> <p><b>NOTE: Events marked with an asterisk (*) are private classes and not church events. Please contact the church office for more information.</b></p> </div>						
<b>5</b> <b>Easter Sunday</b> Holy Communion <b>Easter Egg Hunt</b>	<b>6</b> *Beg. Japanese Class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	<b>7</b> Bible Study @10am	<b>8</b> <b>Wednesday Group @8am</b> *Jets/Jetts Meeting @7pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> Trustees/ Diaconate/C.E. Board Meeting @11:30am	<b>13</b> *Beg. Japanese Class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	<b>14</b> Bible Study @10am	<b>15</b> <b>Wednesday Group @8am</b> *Dance Class @7pm	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> Council Meeting @11:30am <b>Goodnews Articles due</b>	<b>20</b> *Beg. Japanese Class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	<b>21</b> Bible Study @10am	<b>22</b> <b>Goodnews Mailing @9am</b> *Dance Class @7pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <b>The "Grateful In All Things" Tea @11am</b>
<b>26</b> <b>H.S./College Fellowship</b>	<b>27</b> *Beg. Japanese Class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	<b>28</b> Bible Study @10am	<b>29</b> <b>Wednesday Group @8am</b> *Dance Class @7pm	<b>30</b>		

<b>Coming in May 2026</b>	<b>3 PAAM Sunday Potluck</b> <b>10 Mother's Day Breakfast/Youth-led Worship</b> <b>24 Memorial Sunday</b> <b>29-30 Annual Gathering</b> <b>31 Guest Preacher Camille Pedersen</b> <b>Teacher/Graduates Appreciation</b> <b>H.S./College Fellowship</b>	<b>See our updated online calendar at:</b> <a href="http://Montebelloucc.org">http://Montebelloucc.org</a>
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Join us for our **Virtual & In-Person Worship Service on Sundays at 10 a.m. :**

YouTube Livestream

Subscribe to our Youtube page to watch our latest videos

([www.youtube.com/mpccucc](http://www.youtube.com/mpccucc))

\*Contact our Church Office for more info

