



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

Officemaderaumc@gmail.com

The Grapevine

500 Sunset, Madera CA 93637 -

(559) 674-8704

June 2025

Sunday Morning Schedule:

10:00 am: Worship

Office Hours:

9:00 am - 12:00 pm Tuesday-Friday

Phone: 559-674-8704

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June 2025

From the Pastor

Are you “on fire” for Jesus? Taken literally, it doesn’t sound very pleasant, but flames are a powerful image of the Holy Spirit, who visibly descended on the disciples in what looked like individual flames. I wonder what that looked like. I wonder what that felt like. I hope you have had an experience where you felt the Spirit moving in you.

The Holy Spirit is what makes Christianity work. Lots of religions teach good morals. But it is the Holy Spirit living inside of us that gives Christians the power to live good lives. The Spirit helps us understand the Bible and apply it to our lives. The Holy Spirit gives us inner personal guidance. The Holy Spirit gives us abilities and motivation to serve. The Holy Spirit guides us back on the right path when we wander off. The Holy Spirit helps us to pray and worship.

Some churches are described as, or carry the name, “Pentecostal.” These churches generally have an expressive worship style and emphasize certain spiritual gifts like tongues and prophecy. But every church is a “Pentecostal” church, because every Christian is a “Pentecostal” Christian.

Every Christian has the Holy Spirit in our heart. Every church is empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit. Every worship service is guided and empowered by the Spirit. Romans 8:9b says that “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.” If we don’t have the Spirit we are just pretending.

So, praise God for his Holy Spirit placed in our hearts. Don’t hide your flame under a basket. Let your flame burn. Let your light shine. Let his fruit grow and his love flow; and may you feel the warmth of the Spirit on fire in your heart.

Yours in Jesus,



Pastor Jim

Committee Spotlight – Nurture & Care

Some of you may not be aware of a group of volunteers in our congregation who work tirelessly to minister to our elderly and disabled. Working in teams, these individuals send cards, make calls, and visit those who are unable to worship consistently with us in person. Our volunteers are sometimes accompanied by Pastor Jim. As a part of our Missions Committee, Mary Long chairs this sub-committee and keeps it organized. The committee consists of Mary Long, Joyce Martinez, Nancy Sherrod, Alice Carter, Nancy Simpson, Bonnie Mazzoni, Rosalie Robinson, Diane Maxfield, and Erica Gonzalez.

Originally funded by a grant (Beulah grant) through United Methodist Women of the Cal-Nevada Conference, this committee has been operating at Madera UMC since 2021. The committee currently services 29 households. In addition to cards, calls and visits, each household receives a monthly mailing entitled Home Touch, which includes one double-sided page of puzzles, articles, and brain stimulators for each week of the month.

If you know of someone in need of this type of attention, please notify Mary or Pastor Jim so that we may add them to our list. Of course, all of the individuals for care are kept confidential. If you are interested in offering nurture and care to others, please feel free to contact Mary, or just attend the next meeting.

The committee meets the second Wednesday of each month in the Conference Room at 5:30 p.m., so the next meeting will be on June 11, 2025. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please join us – the rewards are tremendous!

Know Your Church Family



David and Geri Brown have both lived in Madera their entire lives. In August, they will celebrate their anniversary of 52 years.

Dave attended George Washington Elementary School, and Geri (McCarty) went to James Monroe Elementary School. “He

lived on this side of Cleveland,” Geri said. “And I was on the other side of Cleveland. We lived over by our church.” She was referring to Trinity Lutheran Church on Lake Street.

They met in junior high, while attending Thomas Jefferson Middle School, but began dating when they were juniors in high school. “We rode on the same bus. We waited at the same bus stop,” Geri said.

They graduated together from Madera High in 1972, and both of them went on to attend Fresno State. After one year of college, they got married. She was 18 and he was 19. “My whole family liked her,” Dave said. He admitted he had been a Baptist before he began attending the Lutheran church with Geri. She said, “He told his granddad that we were getting married and I was Lutheran. His granddad said ‘Well that’s the next best thing to being Baptist.’”

Dave was interested in the construction business. It just didn’t make sense to him to take biology and history in order to be a house builder, so he decided to take a year off from school to see what he wanted to do.

Geri wanted to be a mom, so neither of them went back to Fresno State. “We graduated from the School of Hard Knocks,” she said. “We wanted to start a family, and we did.”

Dave said, “I started from scratch. I wanted to be an architect, so I started with architectural drafting. Then after a year at Fresno State, I decided I liked the outside. I didn’t want to be

inside just drawing plans. That’s when I decided to try construction.”

He got his contractor’s license in 1974. Geri said at that time he was the youngest one in California. “He built a house between our senior year and our freshman year of college,” she said. “His dad had a property and said, ‘Build me a rental.’” That was Dave’s first experience in the building process.

“I was successful in building my construction business. My company was called Madera Custom Builders,” he said. He decided he could always go back to school if he wanted or needed to get more education, but he provided well for his family. He built homes throughout Madera County.

Geri said, “And then one day when I had two babies, he came home, and said, ‘Let’s buy Flowers by Helen.’ I looked at him and said, ‘Why?’ He says, ‘It’s for sale. Let’s buy it.’ It became ours.” It was right across the street from the post office. At the time, Geri didn’t know anything about the flower business, but she learned quickly from the existing employees.

After a couple of years, they bought Madera Flower Shop on the corner of 6th and Lake. Shortly afterwards they merged the two businesses into one location, and had that business for about 10 years.

Dave and Geri have two children, Courtney and Matthew, and five grandchildren. All of them live in Madera.

"I put in 25 years at Madera Unified," Geri said. "I volunteered in my kids' classrooms and all my grandkids." She was a teacher's aide at Howard and Lincoln. "I've been on a lot of field trips. We were band parents. Courtney was a flag girl. So, we were band boosters. We had to help with the equipment and stuff at the football games and whatnot."

The family has moved from one house to another many times throughout the Brown's marriage. Dave would build a home for the family, and when someone wanted to buy their house, they would sell and move into another house Dave built.

Dave retired in 2005. They have lived in their current house now for 21 years. "Our next move will be to Jay Chapel," Geri said.

The couple has always worked together, and started several businesses. Dave said, "We've both always been self-employed. Neither of us has ever worked for anybody else."

Geri said, "I've always been working with him. When we sold the flower shop, we started another business called Madera Accounts Receivable. We had gotten a computer to do our billing at the flower shop, and so when we sold, we did the billing and payroll for other businesses."

Now, they have a small pistachio farm of 10 acres located at Avenue 17 off Road 26. It was a piece of property they purchased some time ago. Originally, Dave was going to build a few houses there, but met with some zoning

problems, so they decided not to build.

Then, one day their grandson, Christian, who had graduated from Fresno State, said, "We need to do something with our property. Let's plant trees." So, in 2017, Dave, Geri and their four grandsons planted pistachios. They are now on their third harvest. Christian is their oldest grandson and is now married and living on the property, in a house Dave built for him.

In January 2020, Dave and Geri, along with a group of others from the Lutheran church, came to Madera United Methodist Church. At the end of 2019, Trinity Lutheran Church in Madera closed. The congregation donated the church building to another congregation, now New Life Assembly.

Geri grew up in that Lutheran church. Dave started going there when he began dating Geri. She had been a Sunday School teacher and the financial secretary. Dave had been the council president for the last 15 years. When it was evident the finances would not continue to support the church, the group of Lutherans together decided to close the church and go elsewhere.

"Everybody who was in the church was on the council the last two years," Dave said. "We did it all as a group, and everything we did was unanimous. The switchover from Lutheran to Methodist was easy for us. The differences are so, so slight, you don't even notice."

On Easter Sunday, 2023, the group of former Lutherans joined Madera United Methodist

Church, and the congregation welcomed them with open arms.

Dave and Geri have been retired now for 20 years. Although they stay busy, they have enjoyed their retirement and their close family. They like to travel, and have been on a number of cruises.

“Because we were successful, and we've had each other, we've had a good life,” Dave said.

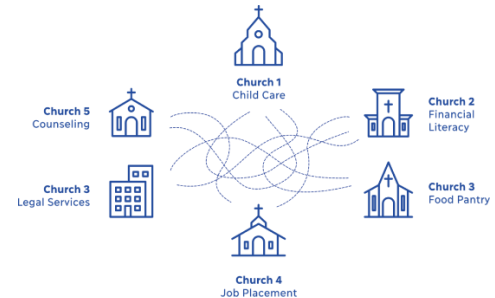
Love INC / MUMC Furniture Ministry



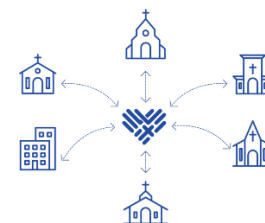
The local affiliate of Love in the Name of Christ (Love INC) is part of a national organization whose mission is to unite local churches to help those in need. The premise is that the local church is God's answer to community brokenness and a part of his plan of redemption and restoration. Love INC mobilizes local churches to offer a holistic approach to caring for people in all areas of life: spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical.

The Love INC Madera Connection Center takes many requests for help each year. All calls are answered by caring volunteers who listen to understand people's situations and direct them to the most appropriate source of help. This can mean a referral to an area agency or services provided by area churches and volunteers. The following two graphics depict how the Love INC Connection Center works.

Without Love INC



With Love INC



The contribution Madera UMC provides to Love INC Madera is a Furniture Ministry. MUMC accepts donated items in good condition which are stored in our shed in the back parking lot. Then when the Connection Center gets a request for a bed or dresser, kitchen table or chairs, they check our inventory in the hope the needed item is on hand and, if so, it is given to the family or individual in need. Anyone with gently used furniture is asked to contact the office to arrange for the donation to be held in our Furniture Ministry inventory.

Landscape Plan Update

We received 27 responses to the Survey Monkey. Thank you to all who took the time to voice their opinion. Following are the

results of the survey:

1. Would you agree that the front of the church would be more appealing if it were landscaped?

Yes – 70.3% - 19

No - 29.6% - 8

2. Knowing that 32% of the cost of the project is already available and that another 9% of the cost has already been pledged, would you be willing to support this project financially?

Yes – 66% - 18

No - 33% - 9

3. Keeping in mind that the two plans we have presented (and are pictured below) both have low maintenance plants, drought resistant plants, and conserve water by using a drip system, which of the two plans would you prefer to see adopted?

The plan with the trees: 25.9% - 7

The plan with the artificial grass: 55.5% - 15

Neither of the above: 18.5% - 5

The Trustees Committee would like to thank Carol Kennedy and Bert Roper for the many hours they have spent developing these plans over the past five (5) years.

Others who need to be thanked are Fred and Martha Mossman, Crystal, Jonathan and Eric Wiggins, David Simpson, David Eddy, Doug Baron and Pastor Jim Garrison for their many, many hours attempting to repair and service the existing irrigation system. This hydraulic system is over 60 years old and parts are now almost impossible to obtain.

Based on the results of the survey, Trustees determined that there is not enough interest in either plan to move forward at this time. Since there needs to be a solution to the water waste (and the cost involved) the church is experiencing and we still wish to maintain the already existing trees and plants, Trustees will pursue other ideas regarding the front of the church and the surrounding grounds.

New Vision Statement



The Council of Bishops is announcing the unveiling of a new vision statement for the United Methodist Church which reflects the Church's deep commitment to embodying God's dream for the world.

The new vision statement is: The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.

The vision statement complements the Church's longstanding mission statement inspired by Matthew 28: 1-20. "This new vision is not simply a statement or a plan, it is a catalyst for transformation," said Bishop Tracey Smith Malong, President of the Council of Bishops. "It is a vision that will help the Church embrace the opportunities before us, to follow where God is leading us, and to more fully engage in our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the

world.”

Resources will be shared this summer at Annual Conference sessions and with leaders within local churches, with lay member resources anticipated to follow in late 2025 to early 2026.

Blessing Bags

Getting ready for our summer distribution of Blessing Bags. This will be the third distribution, and the goal is to assemble 150 bags. Bags will include deodorant, tissues, lip balm, sunglasses, sunblock shaving kits, lotions, dog and cat food. The filled drawstring bags are distributed during a regular Saturday meal at the Holy Family Table.

The total cost of the items for the bags is almost \$800 and Missions Committee is asking for special donations to cover the cost of the included items. Beginning in June, envelopes will be available for contributions and all donations are greatly appreciated. MUMC youth participate in handing out the bags.



Just for Fun Birthday Party

Final preparations are underway for Sunday June 8 when, following worship, we will join in the Social Hall to celebrate Pentecost with a special Birthday Party! Nachos will be served, and birthday cake will be hosted. Tables will be marked with the months, and you are asked to sit at the table of your individual

birthday month. Special gifts will be provided, and a fun time is guaranteed. Make plans to stay and enjoy this event – just for fun!!

Finance Committee Update

Our God is an awesome God, and he loves us and cares for us. When all is going well, we know that he brings us many blessings. When times get a little tougher, he is there, and we know we can depend on him to bring us through it. God always provides. He is a loving and caring parent who will meet the needs of his children.

“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

Church finances are always a concern, and we want to be good stewards of all that belongs to God, remembering first that we are a ministry and that our church exists to glorify God and to spread the gospel.

It is now that time of year when the finances get a bit tight. The contributions are lower, and some of the bills are higher; but we are still able to pay the bills and provide services for the Lord’s work. We remain faithful in paying our tithes to the conference each month.

For the month of April 2025:

Total Income	\$ 12,719.86
Total Expenses	<u>22,180.27</u>
Net Income (loss)	\$ (9,460.41)

For the year 2025:

Total Income	\$ 87,163.05
Total Expenses	<u>92,698.34</u>
Net Income (loss)	\$ (5,535.29)

4/30/25 General Fund Balance \$108,148.18
 4/30/25 Restricted Funds Balance \$66,527.92
 4/30/25 Endowment Fund Balance \$99,882.64

Thank you for your prayers and your contributions to the church.

Nancy Simpson, Finance Chair

4th Sunday Lunch

Our Nurture & Care Committee will host lunch on the 22nd immediately following worship. The menu will be a true summer meal – hot dogs with all the fixings, salad, chips, lemonade, watermelon and ice cream. The charge is by donation only and the proceeds will benefit the mission and projects of the Nurture & Care Committee.



Make your plans to attend and enjoy this great summertime feast and support the work being done by this wonderful group!

Trustees Report

The East driveway of the church has been repaired and is now open for use. It was noted at the last Trustees and Church Council meetings that it appears to be somewhat improved – cars do not bottom out as easily.

The parking lot curbs, and parking stops/blocks have been painted. A small leak above the sink in the kitchen on the South side of the building has been repaired.

The office furniture from CAPMC has been delivered to the office and placed where appropriate. The solar screens for the windows on the East side of the sanctuary have been reinstalled. The light outside the A/V booth in the sanctuary has been repaired.

The next regular meeting of Trustees is scheduled for June 3, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. All are invited to attend.

Bobby Carter, Chair

Central Valley District Rally

Mark your calendar for Saturday July 19 when MUMC will host the churches in the Central Valley District. This Rally will include music, singing, prayer and, of course, a potluck! DS Mary Maaga will provide a State of the District address. There will be a celebration of those newly serving and those retiring from the District or leaving to serve elsewhere. A day of celebration is planned, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Grapevine Mailing

With the cost of postage rising every few months, we're hoping to cut down on the newsletters that are mailed. The Grapevine is sent out electronically on the 1st of the month and if you prefer this option or can convert to

online, please call the office at 559-674-8704 so we can take you off the mailing list. This will save us over \$1 per newsletter. We now mail about 40 per month so the cost adds up. Thank you for considering this cost-saving option!

Estate Planning



Remembering your church in your estate

We're almost halfway through 2025, and it is a good time to think about estate planning. We all have something to pass on to others when we leave this world, and whether you are a young person or an older adult, you need to think about how you want to distribute what you have so that others can benefit. We don't know when our final moment will come, so it is never too soon to make those plans.

Your church can be a beneficiary of your estate or a life insurance policy. If you have not already done so, consider naming Madera United Methodist Church as a beneficiary. Our building is in constant need of attention. If you are planning to give to the church as a beneficiary, you might consider designating some of your giving to the Building Maintenance Fund.

Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) and contributions to the church

If you have an individual retirement account (IRA) and you have reached the age for which you are required to distribute annually some of your account (called a Required Minimum Distribution, or RMD), you may give some or

all of this distribution to the church, with greater tax benefit than if you gave to the church from other accounts.

This is called a Qualified Charitable Distribution. A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) is a distribution made directly by the trustee of your individual retirement arrangement (IRA), other than an SEP or SIMPLE IRA, to certain qualified organizations. The total QCDs for the year can't be more than \$100,000.

If all the requirements are met, a QCD may be nontaxable. This means it will not be reported as income, and because it will not be in your income, it cannot be reported as a deduction on your Schedule A. However, this is a greater tax benefit than what a Schedule A deduction will give.

Some people in our church family have already taken advantage of this benefit. If you would like to hear more about it, contact the administrator of your IRA.

June Birthdays

6/ 2	Carol Kennedy
6/ 7	Bobby Carter
	Mary Mossman
	Muriel Lynn
6/12	Larry Lowder
6/13	Geri Cox
6/14	Feng Lewis
6/15	Douglas Baron
6/17	Robert Combs
	AJ Pasma
6/20	Austin Pasma



6/21 Lynn Bundy
6/24 Michael Ruiz
6/29 David Brown
Denise Burns

June Wedding Anniversaries

6/ 2 Jim & Kathy Garrison
6/ 3 Brandon & Paige Jones
6/14 Matt & Katie Otstot
6/19 Wayne & Susan Miller
6/24 John & Teresa Hall
6/26 David & Marlene Lee

If your Birthday or Anniversary is incorrect or is not listed, please call the church office so we can update our records.

Greeters

6/ 1 Pat Galleano
6/ 8 Vivian & Mike Chicconi
6/15 Erica Gonzalez & Javier
Valenzuela
6/22 Dianna & Marie Combs
6/29 Ginnie Sterling & Nola

Coffee Hour Host/Hostesses

6/ 1 Vivian & Mike Chicconi
6/ 8 Dianna Combs & Natalie
6/15 Mary Long
6/22 4th Sunday Lunch – Nurture &
Care Committee
6/29 Ginnie Sterling & Nola

AV Team Assignments

6/ 1 Crystal & Doug
6/ 8 Martha & Fred
6/15 Sue & Tiffany
6/22 Crystal & Doug
6/29 Martha & Fred

Online Giving

Our online giving portal may be accessed through our website at maderaumc.org. At the Top of the opening page, there is a red “Donate” button, which will take you to our Online Giving site. There you will find various options.

You may also use our QR Code that will take you directly to our Online Giving site. Just open your phone camera and hover it over the QR Code. Then touch the pop-up that appears.



June 25, 2025 @ 12:00 noon
Please send Articles for the
Grapevine by this date.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

The Grapevine

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
1 10:00 am Worship Service Communion	2 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH/CR)	3 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	4	5 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR)	6 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	7
8 10:00 am Worship Service Birthday Party 	9 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH/CR)	10 9:00 am Small Group (CR) 5:00 pm Trustees (CR)	11 5:30 pm Nurture & Care (CR)	12 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR)	13 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	14
15 10:00 am Worship Service	16 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm (Cedar) Small Group 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	17 9:00 am Small Group (CR) 5:00 pm Missions (CR)	18	19 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 9:00am 55+ Food Distribution (PL)	20 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	21 UMW 9:30 am (FR)
22 10:00 am Worship Service 4 th Sunday Lunch – Nurture & Care	23 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 6:00 pm Finance (CR) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	24 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	25 9:00 am Food Distribution (PL) SPRC 5:30 pm (CR)	26 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am Crafts (CR)	27 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	28
29 10:00 am Worship Service	30 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 9:00 am Crafts (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)					