



# BEACH BREEZE

A Monthly Newsletter From Pacific Beach United Methodist Church

December 2025

## *Ordination: For Good*

By Adam M

*Light Spoiler Warning: the pair of “Wicked” movies, “Wicked” Broadway play*

Several of my clergy mentors have appreciated the Broadway show “Wicked” and its music. I saw it at the San Diego Civic Theater in 2016. Even though I had heard the music several times, its message didn’t really sink in until I heard it interwoven with its story. I got to see “Wicked: For Good “ (the second movie based on the stage musical) on opening weekend and (of course) I cried.

I am particularly moved by the divergent paths of Elphaba and Glinda. Both rose to the spotlight in very different ways: Glinda - by shrewdly owning her limelight as a popular figure, Elphaba - simply for existing outside the accepted norms. At the end of Part 1, each woman makes a very different choice: Elphaba chooses to eschew the systems of power that would brand her a traitor for stepping out of line, and Glinda chooses to remain on her well-established ascent to popularity and prestige.

These womens’ stories represent two sides of the same coin, two very different paths of struggle that are often pitted against one another. Fighting for basic fundamental rights of oppressed and marginalized groups— these struggles take place both inside and outside of institutions and systems. People in positions of prominence often can’t take bold action or speak truth like those on the outside. People outside of systems and institutions cannot wield the power and influence over public opinion as adeptly as insiders can. Both roles are formative and necessary in the struggle for liberation, freedom, and justice.

Here is where my own story overlaps. At a pivotal point in my pastoral formation, I was listening to “Thank Goodness” (the opening number in “For Good”). Glinda sings that although she couldn’t be happier, “there’s a kind of a sort of cost. ... There are bridges you’ve crossed you didn’t know you [had] crossed until you crossed.” Glinda acknowledges her path to prominence was not without its own heartache and pitfalls. I have long known that ordination in the institutional church would have similar heartbreak. These lyrics hit different as I was experiencing those first ministerial heartaches. At that moment, I was on one end of a bridge and had the option to step off without it being a setback.

And I had to choose to get off the bridge.

The story of “Wicked” reflects my own path to ordination. Though not being ordained within the United Methodist denomination, my ordination service will be hosted by a United Methodist congregation — here at PB UMC. Even though Glinda and Elphaba’s paths ultimately diverged, each one expressed gratitude for

*Continued on Page 3*

## Pastor Lori's Monthly Message

Beloveds in Christ,

The end of our calendar year overlaps with the beginning of our Christian year, reminding us of the sacredness of these threshold times, holding endings and beginnings close together. During Advent, the first season in the new Christian year, we prepare for the coming of Christ in a variety of different ways. Our souls look back in order to remember the ancient coming of Emmanuel, God with us in the Christ Child, born in Bethlehem. But we also seek the coming of Christ in our here and now, smack dab in the middle of the joys and sorrows we experience today, individually and collectively. And alongside all that, our souls cast a longing look toward the future as we pray for the coming of God's kin-dom with its promised fullness of peace and justice, mercy, righteousness and restoration for all God's creation. Because Advent is so rich and so full, there's a place, I believe, for anyone and everyone to connect with God, themselves and others.

Our Advent series, *What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent*, comes from our friends at Sanctified Art. The creators of the series introduce the theme this way: "Every Advent, we light candles, sing carols, and pray for Christ's coming because we believe God entered a frightened world to bring good news. We hold onto hope because we believe that Christ did come—that's the promise of the season. Our hope is not flimsy or fleeting. It's gritty, resilient, and can endure—no matter what we fear or face. This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear." We'll be exploring these themes, along with our own fear and hopefulness, in a variety of different ways.

Over the four Sundays of Advent, we'll gather for worship, sing the songs of the season and light candles as we make our way toward Bethlehem. Kids in Sunday School will be following the children's program which

provides lots of opportunity for reflection and creativity! There will be an Advent Calendar for children and one for adults, a way to be intentional, day by day, as we prepare for the coming of Emmanuel, God with us. Our Advent Small Group Study, led by the warm and wonderful Adam M. will be a reflection/sharing group that draws on the themes from Sunday as well as poetry, artwork and other reflections provided in our Advent devotional booklet. Booklets will be available in the church lobby and/or available in electronic form. Look for the link in your weekly church email or reach out to me for more information!

On Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 3:00 p.m. we'll offer a Blue Christmas Service, designed for folks who struggle with grief or depression around the holidays. This year our service will be led by the Rev. Lesley Brogan. It is our tradition to share this tender and lovely service with our siblings from La Jolla UMC. We are honored to host this year and hope you'll join us and invite a friend who might find such a service meaningful and supportive. On Christmas Eve, we'll enjoy worship at 7:00 p.m., closing with carols and candlelight around the tree in the courtyard! And this year we're doing BREAKFAST CHURCH in the social hall on the Sunday after Christmas.

I look forward to moving through this Advent season with all of you. It's a journey that should be traveled with faith companions and friends. May God bless and meet us as we turn our attention to the ways Christ enters in...to our fears, our hopes, our lives, our church, our community, our country and world, to bring peace, hope and joy to every corner of our hearts and all God's creation.

In Christ,  
Pastor Lori



## All Church Conference - Save the Date!

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1:00p.m.: Hughes Hall**

Rev. J.T. Greenleaf from Coronado UMC will preside over our annual review of the ministry and business of the church. We'll take a look at next year's budget, vote on leadership positions, share our annual membership audit and celebrate how God has been with us in the last year and where God might lead us in the next! All church members have a vote at the Church Conference. All are invited to attend!

# ***We Care for One Another***

## **Good News: Just What the Doctor Ordered**

By “Doc”

This time *you’re* the story.

It’s the time of year when we wish each other a “happy holiday.” Did you know there’s a way for you to have a happier holiday? Science tells us that knowing a secret about something good that will happen to someone else, especially a surprise, increases the feel-good chemicals in our brains. Brain scans show altruism feels good, and apparently when we know a good *secret*, it’s amped up. This is why random acts of kindness are so powerful. Although keeping secrets isn’t generally thought to be a good thing, knowing a secret about something good soon to happen to someone else lights up our brains. Supersize the effect by planning a surprise for someone else, keep it totally to yourself and enjoy the ride. I call it “elfing.” By the way, it plays right into the idea of giving without expectation (Luke 6:35), and *you* get a huge reward for it. So, do a bit of elfing, and have the happiest of holidays!

*Laugh often & live healthy!*

**:Doc**

## ***December Communion Offering***

### ***Shoreline Community Services***

PB UMC’s December communion offering will go to support Shoreline Community Services, founded by members of this church ten years ago.

If you’d like to educate yourself on the many creative ways Shoreline accomplishes its mission, visit its web site at [shorelinecs.org](http://shorelinecs.org).

### ***“Ordination—For Good,” continued from Page 1***

the way they were formed and shaped by their enduring connection.

It is my hope for this article to accomplish several ends. One, to express my gratitude for the way this congregation has stewarded my call and formation. Two, to inspire folks to watch this amazing set of movie musicals. Finally, to extend a hearty invitation for all to attend my ordination service on **Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup>**. Christian ordination always occurs within community, and it was in this community where I first heard that call. More details will come; but the service will be livestreamed, Ron and the choir will lead music, and a community brunch potluck will follow. This church has changed me for good, and I hope to see each one of you on this celebration day!



The *Beach Breeze* is a monthly publication of the Pacific Beach United Methodist Church. Please visit our website at [www.myPBchurch.org](http://www.myPBchurch.org).

*Beach Breeze* Editor:  
Craig Roberts

# ***We Grow in Grace & Faith***

## **Advent Small Group: What Do You Fear?**

By Adam M

This year for Advent, we will be convening a 6-week life group that will correspond with the Sermon series for Advent through Epiphany. Rather than a learning-focused video series or book study, this group will attend to the four or five devotional entries accompanying the weekly Lectionary scriptures.

Pick up a physical (or digital) devotional guide by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

Thursday and Friday and Saturday, each group member will spend time with the devotionals, meditations, and artwork provided by Sanctified Art. Sunday we will hear Pastor Lori's sermon. Monday we will meet for this life discussion group. Then Wednesday, folks will meet for the weekly Bible study.

This life group will meet Monday evenings at 6:30pm on Zoom. The tentative schedule is included below. If you would like to join in and receive the Zoom invites please reach out to AdamM@pbumc.org.

Digital Devotional: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/361593675/>

Dec 1 - We Long For God To Break In

Dec 8 - God Is At Work

Dec 15 - We Are Called Forward

Dec 22 - Give Me Your Hand

Dec 29 - Let Fear Fuel A Fire For Justice

Jan 5 - Fear Doesn't Stop Us

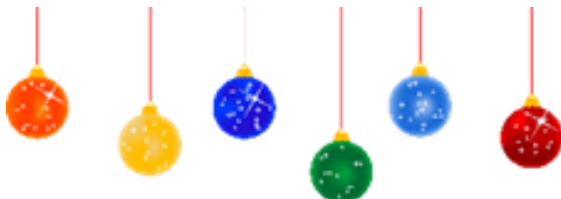


On November 16<sup>th</sup>, PB UMC celebrated Ron Jessee's 40 years at our church.

Above, Pastor Lori presents Ron with an plaque of appreciation as Ron's husband Louis Perez and the Voices of Praise look on.

Photo by Craig Roberts

***Editor's Note: The poem that Pastor Lori read in honor of Ron is printed on the next page in its entirety.***



CCSA Christmas Baskets for 2025

We are once again collecting non-perishable food items and a gift card for Christmas food baskets for low-income families. If you would like to shop for requested food items and bring them to the collection box in the church lobby, here are the suggestions:

box of stuffing mix  
canned fruit  
canned cranberry sauce  
can of chicken or vegetable broth  
box of mashed potato mix  
canned green beans  
canned corn  
box of cake or cookie mix  
bag of rice

You may also donate via cash or check in the Sunday collection plate OR online (note "CCSA Baskets" on the envelope or in the "give to" field), which will be used to purchase food items. You may also donate \$50 or \$75 Target or Walmart gift cards that will be included in each family's gift box. We are accepting donations from Sunday, November 9th to Sunday, December 7th, this year's deadline! Please make sure to bring your donations early!

Contact Mary Margaret Rowe at [marymargaretrowe@aol.com](mailto:marymargaretrowe@aol.com) if you have any questions. Help PBUMC to create some Merry Christmas!



# ***We Reach Out to Others***

## ***I Go to Sing***

By Lindy Thompson

I might be exhausted and the children might be cranky,  
but I will be going to church on Sunday.  
Don't know who is preaching, doesn't matter –  
the sermon may be helpful or not, holds my attention or doesn't –  
it's the singing.

I go to sing.

I get up,  
get clean,  
get dressed,  
possibly get mad (at not-ready kids, at empty coffee pot, at  
traffic)  
get going,  
get there,  
get seated,  
get comfortable,  
get focused

and when the music starts,

get saved.

It's the singing.

I go to sing.

It's the willingness to stand if you are able,  
the common agreement on page number,  
the voluntary sharing of songbooks with people on your row,  
even ones you rode there with –

but most of all,  
it's the collective in-breath before the first sound is made,  
the collective drawing upon the grace of God,  
the collective, if inadvertent, admission

that we are all human,  
all fragile,  
all in need of the sustaining air, freely dispensed,  
all in need of each other to get the key right and not sound dis-  
cordant –

it's the hidden life-celebration  
in the act of making a joyful noise,  
all together.

We don't even have to sound that good.  
Singing together still brings home  
the we-ness of worship,  
the not-alone-ness of life in God,  
the best of all we have to offer each other.

When we are singing, I think that I might actually be able to  
forgive you  
for being so terribly human,  
and you might be able to forgive me  
for being so terribly not there yet,  
and we might be able to find peace now,  
not postpone it for some heavenly hereafter  
but live and breathe it today,  
drawing in the grace of God,  
voicing out our need and hope and gratitude and longing.

When we are singing, I can feel the better world coming,  
and if I get to be a part of it, you do too . . .

so sing with me,  
and we'll make our way down that blessed road together,  
collectively better  
than we ever thought possible.

# Circle of Support

October 2025

## Record of Generosity

	Actual	Budget
<b>Activity in October</b>		
Giving	\$ 19,343	\$ 22,040
Other Income	\$ 8,740	\$ 8,708
Total Available for Ministry	\$ 28,083	\$ 30,748
Total Expended for Ministry	\$ 38,100	\$ 34,403
Income Minus Expenses	(\$ 10,017)	(\$ 3,654)

	Actual	Budget
<b>2025 Year-To-Date</b>		
Giving	\$ 247,395	\$ 220,401
Other Income	\$ 123,970	\$ 135,782
Total Available for Ministry	\$ 371,365	\$ 356,182
Total Expended for Ministry	\$ 371,734	\$ 384,999
Income Minus Expenses	(\$ 370)	(\$ 28,817)

## Reflections From the Finance Team

By Heide T

Giving has been generous for the year – thank you for your gifts! Spending is under budget for the year – thank you to all those involved in managing resources!

We will continue to use and plan our resources wisely and trust in God, who provides. We are grateful for your ongoing generosity in prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

Thank you for the many ways you support the mission and ministries of PB UMC!

**Editor's Note:** There was a mistake in the top half of the Record of Generosity in last month's *Beach Breeze*. The corrected table is at right. We regret the error.

	Actual	Budget
<b>Activity in September</b>		
Giving	\$ 18,266	\$ 22,040
Other Income	\$ 20,428	\$ 22,932
Total Available for Ministry	\$ 38,695	\$ 44,972
Total Expended for Ministry	\$ 44,246	\$ 39,370
Income Minus Expenses	(\$ 5,552)	\$ 5,602

### CHURCH STAFF:

Lead Pastor: The Rev Lori Leopold  
Music Director: Ron Jessee  
Director of Technical Arts: Michael Beu

Office Administrator: Susie Virgilio  
Assistant Director of Technical Arts: Brian Kaplan  
Campus Maintenance Coordinator: Troy McGarrity

Church Office: [www.pbumc.org/who-we-are/contact/](http://www.pbumc.org/who-we-are/contact/) phone: 858-274-6573

# Calendar of Events

Every Sunday: **10:00 am, Worship Celebration**  
Child Care Available

## Week 1

Mon, Dec. 1 6:00 pm, Al-Anon  
6:30 pm, Advent Small Group ("What Do You Fear?") via Zoom (p. 4)  
Tues, Dec. 2 6:00 pm, Choir Practice  
Wed, Dec. 3 11:30 am, Scripture and Sermon Study, Narthex and via Zoom  
4:00 pm, SD Project Grace  
Thurs, Dec. 4 9:30 am, Prayers and Squares Quilters  
7:00 pm, Narc Anon  
Fri, Dec. 5 Church Office Closed  
Sat, Dec. 6 10:00 am, Al-Anon  
5:30 pm, Narc Anon

## Week 2

Sun, Dec. 7 9:30 am, Prayer Circle  
10:00 am, Worship  
1:00 pm, 2025 Church Conference, Hughes Hall (p. 2)  
2:00 pm, Movie: "O, Brother Where Art Thou?" (2000), starring George Clooney, Holly Hunter and John Goodman (p. 8)  
Mon, Dec. 8 6:00 pm, Al-Anon  
6:30 pm, Advent Small Group ("What Do You Fear?") via Zoom (p. 4)  
Tues, Dec. 9 6:00 pm, Choir Practice  
Wed, Dec. 10 11:30 am, Scripture and Sermon Study, Narthex and via Zoom  
4:00 pm, SD Project Grace  
Thurs, Dec. 11 7:00 pm, Narc Anon  
Fri, Dec. 12 Church Office Closed  
3:00 pm, Finance Focus (via Zoom)  
6:00 pm, PB Youth Turn Up – Christmas Carol-Oke at Christ Lutheran Church  
Sat, Dec. 13 10:00 am, Al-Anon  
1:00 pm, Pacific Beach Holiday Parade  
5:30 pm, Narc Anon

**Lunch Bunch and Game Day are taking a break in December!**



## Week 3

Sun, Dec. 14 9:30 am, Prayer Circle  
10:00 am, Worship  
Mon, Dec. 15 6:00 pm, Al-Anon  
6:30 pm, Advent Small Group ("What Do You Fear?") via Zoom (p. 4)  
Tues, Dec. 16 6:00 pm, Choir Practice  
7:00 pm, Church Council (via Zoom)  
Wed, Dec. 17 11:30 am, Scripture and Sermon Study, Narthex and via Zoom  
4:00 pm, SD Project Grace  
Thurs, Dec. 18 Beach Breeze Materials Due  
9:30 am, Prayers and Squares Quilters  
7:00 pm, Narc Anon  
Fri, Dec. 19 Church Office Closed  
Sat, Dec. 20 10:00 am, Al-Anon  
5:30 pm, Narc Anon

## Week 4

Sun, Dec. 21 9:30 am, Prayer Circle  
10:00 am, Worship  
1:00 pm, Movie: "Home Alone" (1990) starring Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci and Catherine O'Hara (p. 8)  
Mon, Dec. 22 3:00 pm, Blue Christmas service  
6:00 pm, Al-Anon  
6:30 pm, Advent Small Group ("What Do You Fear?") via Zoom (p. 4)  
Tues, Dec. 23 6:00 pm, Choir Practice  
Wed, Dec. 24 4:00 pm, SD Project Grace  
5:30 pm, Storefront Ministries  
7:00 pm, Christmas Eve Service  
Thurs, Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY  
Church Office Closed  
7:00 pm, Narc Anon  
Fri, Dec. 26 Church Office Closed  
Sat, Dec. 27 10:00 am, Al-Anon  
5:30 pm, Narc Anon

## Week 5

Sun, Dec. 28 9:30 am, Prayer Circle  
10:00 am, Worship (Breakfast Church)  
Mon, Dec. 29 6:00 pm, Al-Anon  
6:30 pm, Advent Small Group ("What Do You Fear?") via Zoom (p. 4)  
Tues, Dec. 30 6:00 pm, Choir Practice  
Wed, Dec. 31 NEW YEARS EVE  
4:00 pm, SD Project Grace

# ***We Love and Worship God***

## ***December Worship/ Scriptures***

- December 7** Second Sunday of Advent  
Holy Communion  
Isaiah 43:19-21  
Matthew 11:1-11
- December 14** Third Sunday of Advent  
Jeremiah 1:4-10  
Luke 1:26-39
- December 21** Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Isaiah 41:5-10  
Matthew 1:18-25
- December 24** Christmas Eve Service  
at 7:00 p.m.  
Luke 2:1-20
- December 28** Breakfast Church in Hughes Hall  
Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

## **Pacific Beach United Methodist Church**



1561 Thomas Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92109

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## ***December Movies Feature a Couple of Resourceful Guys***

By Craig Roberts



The two main characters in our December movies couldn't be further apart in age, era or circumstances—but they are certainly both enterprising and creative.

The 2000 movie “O Brother, Where Art Thou?” stars George Clooney as Ulysses, a clever escaped convict on the run with two of his buddies in 1937 Mississippi. If you're familiar with Homer's “Odyssey,” you'll quickly recognize much of this film's plot. Other stars include Holly Hunter, John Goodman and Tim Blake Nelson. We'll screen this movie at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> — one hour later than usual due to the annual church conference.

Then on the 21<sup>st</sup> we'll watch eight-year-old Kevin (Macaulay Culkin), inadvertently abandoned by his family, defend his home from Christmastime intruders in 1990's “Home Alone,” also starring Joe Pesci and Catherine O'Hara. We'll be back to

our usual 1:00 p.m. screening time for this movie. The run time is a brisk 103 minutes, so we'll be finished in time for the Blue Christmas service at 3:00 p.m.

Please bring anything you like to snack on (such as a late lunch)! And if you can't attend in person, consider putting our screened films on your personal watchlist and let me know if you enjoyed them (or if you didn't)!

