Laundry Love …

I recently heard about an organization called “Laundry Love.” I did some research, and here’s what I discovered …

The story of Laundry Love began with T-Bone (Eric), a homeless gentleman living in Ventura Calif. In one particular conversation, a question was asked of him: “T-Bone, how can we come alongside your life in a way that would matter?” His response was honest and practical. “If I had clean clothes I think people would treat me like a human being.”

Every single Laundry Love effort, or Laundry Love spin off and/or partnership around the U.S. is attached to this man. His desire for worth and welcome is found in us all. We all yearn to be treated as human beings. We never thought that this simple conversation 12 years ago would spark an idea that continues to influence and care for tens of thousands of people every month.

The creative and collective energy used to sustain, expand and share Laundry Love with you reminds us that every human being has tremendous worth, value and possibility.

What is the hope of Laundry Love (LL)? It’s about people joining together. LL believes that through the neutral space of a laundromat, every guest and stranger can become a friend. This idea tears at the labeled constructs of “us” and “them” and erodes the societal, economic and cultural divides that separate people.

LL is not the goal, but a beginning.

LL seeks to pull neighbor out of neighborhood and encourage everyday hospitality and rebuilding or rekindling trust within a community or neighborhood through human care. Unity built by selfless concern and consistency. LL calls us to live lives that return. LL is not meant to be a one-off effort. It’s a commitment. A life that returns is a practice of love.

LL is not a service project or something you “do to” or for people. It’s an expression of living “with” others.

So, what do you think? Is this something that the community would support and bring to life right here in the Westchester / Inglewood communities?

If the answer is yes, the first thing we need is a committed group. This could be friends, family, coworkers, community groups or church groups, like La Tijera UMC.

If you are interested in working together to start a local Laundry Love, email “info@latijeraumc” and let us know!

Dates to Remember …

01/01—Worship at 9:30 a.m. Communion will be served.
01/03—Center Classes resume.
01/08—Worship 9:30 a.m. SAD: Spiritual Affective Disorder Worship series begins.
01/15—PATH West LA breakfast service at 7 a.m.
01/15—Worship 9:30 a.m.
01/16—MLK, Jr. Birthday—Center for Children closed.
01/19—Ad Council 6:30 p.m
01/22—Worship 9:30 a.m.
01/22—Cool Harvest Potluck & Movie at 6:30 p.m.
01/29—Worship at 9:30 a.m.
02/04—West District Training Event—Holman UMC
02/05—Worship at 9:30 a.m. Communion will be served.
02/05—The Gathering at 6:30 p.m.
On Saturday, February 4th from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at Holman United Methodist Church (3320 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles 90018) it’s the West District’s Training Conference!

The West District Training Conference features worship, your choice of two workshops, lunch, and fellowship! This is a time to be refreshed and renewed.

You can get an early bird price for the entire day (including lunch!) of $10.00 per person by registering before January 17th. Registration will be $25.00 per person after the 17th.

There are workshops for church business: Human Resources, Developing Personnel Policies, Tables 1, 2 & 3 Report Training, Serving as a Trustee, Church Finance Made Easy, and 10 How-to’s of Church Websites.

Workshops for Personal Enrichment: Traditional Worship Elements & the Liturgical Season, Make Space for God, Prayer and Spiritual Discernment, Sex: Healthy, Supportive and Progressive Conversation.

Congregational Ministry Workshops: A 21st Century Model for Worship, From Going Fishing to Catching F.I.S.H.-Intersections of Evangelism and Discipleship, Monday is Coming—Are you Ready?

Church & Community Workshops: Why Welcoming Isn’t Enough, Confronting Violence, Beyond Cultural Competency.

To Register: Please visit westdistricttraining.com

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**Highlights of Engagement in 2016**

2016 was another busy year for La Tijera UMC. Here are a few of the ways we engaged in outreach …

**PATH West Los Angeles**

We continue our partnership with PATH West Los Angeles (People Assisting the Homeless) and prepare and serve breakfast to the clients of PATH West LA on the third Sunday of every month. We celebrate the birthdays of the residents of PATH West Los Angeles each month, and on Christmas Day, we celebrated Christmas with the residents, prepared and served lunch, and shared the joy of the holidays together.

**Suicide Prevention & Awareness Programs**

We were once again a proud sponsor of the 2016 Alive & Running 5K for Suicide Prevention & Awareness Programs at Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services. Almost $5,000.00 was donated to suicide prevention programs!

**LAX Food Pantry**

15 holiday meals were donated to the LAX Food Pantry this Christmas for families in need.

**Westside Food Bank**

In October we participated in the Westside Food Bank’s Annual Hunger Walk. We helped raise $116,466.36 to fight hunger in our local communities. The need for food assistance in 2016 was up by over 85% - together we will continue to make a difference.

**Reconciling Ministries Network**

We continue to support the rights and inclusion of our LGBTQ population in the United Methodist Church through the Reconciling Ministries Network through our donations and justice work.

Your generosity also supported The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Disability Ministries, Native American Ministries, Human Relations programs, and Imagine No Malaria!

La Tijera UMC—a small church with a mega heart!
PATH West Los Angeles

On the third Sunday of each month, volunteers of La Tijera UMC meet at the PATH West Los Angeles facility and serve breakfast to the residents. We serve, share stories and come together in fellowship. After breakfast, we clean up and head back to the church in time for worship at 9:30 a.m. It’s a busy morning, but it’s rich in Spirit.

We need a maximum of five people for the breakfast service, but we also welcome volunteers for food preparation and donations towards the cost of the supplies.

If you are interested in participating in the partnership with PATH West Los Angeles, please email the church at info@latijeraumc.org. This year, we will once again participate in PATH’s “Welcome Home” program. “Welcome Home” provides the essentials for a family or individual transitioning from homelessness into a home. The items range from furniture, bedding, kitchen items, to toiletries. We will work together with five other United Methodist churches in LAX area to “Welcome Home” individuals or families transitioning into housing.

We will have more information about “Welcome Home” in February.

Once a month, we provide Subway gift cards and a birthday celebration for the residents of PATH West Los Angeles. Email the church at info@latijeraumc.org for more information.

SAD: Spiritual Affective Disorder

Winter can be a time of Seasonal Affective Disorder when the lack of sunlight affects our moods and ability to cope effectively. But Spiritual Affective Disorder can also be a factor as we lead lives that are too crowded, busy, overcommitted, sometimes disturbing and uncertain. At the turn of this new year, we will explore everyday life activities that can become spiritual practices—deepening our experience of a meaningful life and make us more “light-hearted.” Our worship series, “SAD: Spiritual Affective Disorder” will begin on January 8th with “Flip the Switch.”

On the 8th, we will talk about the fact that millions of people suffer from some sort of anxiety or depression disorder. If you do not, chances are you are close to someone who does. As we begin our series, we will look at spiritual practices to get us out of the mid-winter blues and into the light of our lives. While not a replacement for medical resources to alleviate depression, we will see how experiencing the everyday activities of our lives as blessing—as filled with God’s offer of radiance—can offer us a chance to be filled with the Light in whom we believe. This first week we affirm that the very act of “arising” each day is a gift from God.

1/15/17—Soothe a Savage
1/22/17—Lighten Up
1/29/17—Make My Day
2/5/17—Altars, Altars Everywhere
2/12/17—Walk This Way
2/19/17—Leave Room for Dessert
2/26/17—Get Up and Don’t Be Afraid

Come on the journey this new year!

Cool Potluck on January 22nd!

On Sunday, January 22nd at 6:30 p.m., we are gathering together for another Cool Potluck!

If you love good food and are concerned about the environment… join us! Food connects us to some of the most important moral questions of our time.

Bring a dish to share! Search for ingredients that are organic, local & seasonal, minimally processed, cage free & grass fed. Invite and neighbor or bring a friend.

After we share a meal together, we will view the film, “GMO OMG.” This film asks the question, “Who controls the future of your food?” GMO OMG explores the systematic corporate takeover and potential loss of humanity’s most precious and ancient inheritance: seeds. Director Jeremy Seifert investigates how loss of seed diversity and corresponding laboratory assisted genetic alteration of food affects his young children, the health of our planet, and freedom of choice everywhere. GMO OMG follows one family’s struggle to live and eat without participating in an unhealthy, unjust, and destructive food system.

To RSVP: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cool-potluck-tickets-30762168474
Mayola’s Corner

Happy New Year to all!
The holiday season is a joyful occasion, but can become overwhelming and stressful. I hope all went well for you and your family.

Another year has passed and it is time for us to begin our journey into the year 2017 with new hopes and dreams. 2016 was filled with many experiences, some memorable and some sad. We elected a new president, and we lost a dear friend of the Center, Bob (the bird man) who brought his bird, Buddy, to visit with the children.

What a privilege and a joy it has been and continues to be to fill your childcare needs and to create a safe and developmentally appropriate environment for our eager and curious children! Their faces remind us always of the importance of the work we do at the Center for Children. We rejoice in our accomplishments and in the children’s accomplishments!

La Tijera United Methodist Center for Children’s staff hope all our families had a joyous holiday season and have a prosperous New Year. We welcome new families who will be joining the Center in 2017 and look forward to seeing our returning families in this new year. We know that you have many choices for childcare, but we are glad that you have allowed us to fill your childcare needs. We appreciate you and thank you for your support! We look forward to spending 2017 with all of you!

Bumblebees

We’ll be seeing some beautiful new little faces here in the Bumblebee room this month. As the little bit “olders” move over to the Caterpillar room, our new ones are arriving! Welcome to our new La Tijera friends!

This month we’ll be observing Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday in honor of equality for all. We will be painting some shiny, sparkling snow flakes and doing lots of rhyming and clapping. The babies are developing their skills at a rapid pace and we love working with them, encouraging them and protecting them during this process.

Please label all bottles & lids, and we can label the rest (diapers, wipes, food & clothes).

- Teachers Kris, Melanie & Suzy
Caterpillars

It was a fun holiday season and we hope that everyone had a beautiful holiday.
Welcome to our new friends Shriya and David—it is great to have new friends. We say goodbye to Tianna, Tiarra and Brooksley as they move to the Butterfly class. We will miss you!
Our January themes: MLK, Jr.’s Birthday, winter and winter animals. Our activities and arts & crafts will support our themes.
Have a safe and happy New Year and all the best in 2017!
- Teacher Rosy

Butterflies

Hope you had a blissful holiday and anticipate a great New Year.
We look forward to an inspirational new year at the Center. We will instill creativity and motivation in a stimulating environment. We encourage children to grow and develop in an ever-changing world. There are concepts which have become outdated and don’t stimulate our young children’s potential. Learning starts with motivation from home and Center participation. Working together promotes education and change. We welcome your input, and promote teacher/parent communication throughout the year. Our primary goal is a creative learning environment for our amazing children. I look forward to hearing from you.
- Teacher Chestina

Transitional Preschool

We wish you a happy New Year and may God bless you all with good health, peace and prosperity.
Happy birthday wishes to Ved Patel and Aditya.
In the month of January, we will review all of our learning thus far, and will learn about Martin Luther King, Jr., and discuss our country’s leaders. We will also participate in winter art projects.
- Teacher Mary

Don’t forget—
the Center will be closed
January 16th in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday.

Room 3

Welcome to 2017! Winter is finally here. Hope everyone enjoyed their holiday. I would like to thank our parents for making our holiday program a success.
Congratulations to Andrew Valdez for being our January student of the month. Happy 5th birthday to Kennedy Morgan on 1/28.
To enhance learning, our children will engage in more creative and hands-on learning experiences to broaden their minds.
- Mrs. Sharon
In his book, *The Redemption of Scrooge,* author Matt Rawle shares that Christmas is an invitation. Christmas is an invitation into relationship with God, through Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. When this invitation is accepted, we discover that we have been redeemed. It is a freely given gift from God, calling us to respond to the world with love. We are invited to break the chains of the things that can pull us down—the chains of power and possessions, distrust and hatred of those who may look different —those who live in a different neighborhood, honor a different religion, speak a different language or have a different skin color—and the chains of judgment, exclusion and greed. So how do we keep Christmas well when the ornaments are put away and the pressures of the world once again creep in? If we accept the invitation of Christmas, we can break the chains of the things we need to let go of in order to be transformed into people who can “keep Christmas well” —not just during Christmas, but each and every day of our lives. We keep Christmas well by our service, our humble witness, our fight for justice - even if we are not the ones being harmed. We keep Christmas well by keeping Christ with us as move through the world with eyes of welcome.

Keeping Christmas well is a gift from God, calling us to respond in the world with love.

Howard Thurman wrote: “I will light the Candles this Christmas, Candles of joy despite all sadness, Candles of hope where despair keeps watch, Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days, Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens, Candles of love to inspire all my living, Candles that will burn all the year long.”

May it be said of all of us that we know how to keep Christmas well and that the candles of love, welcome & justice will burn all year long. Happy New Year.