



TWIN TOWERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
170th Anniversary
Following Jesus. Thriving in Community. Healing the World.
1853 - 2023



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Celebration Program

October 15, 2023

Worship Service

Welcome
Opening Worship
Scripture Reading
Sermon
Worship
Historica I Presentation
Closing Worship
Benediction



Luncheon Reception

Welcome
Special Music by BAMP* Choir
Fellowship Prayer
Luncheon
Guest Speakers
Closing Remarks & Prayer

*BAMP - Bay Area Music Project

Who We Are

We are people who have the common dream of providing better opportunities, safer homes and basic needs for not only our loved ones but also the last and the least in our neighborhoods and beyond. We are a spiritual home to those we serve and those who love serving. We are held together by our desire to follow Jesus, and our love for this faith community. We are a multicultural, multigenerational church that welcomes you regardless of your socioeconomic status, education, gender, or sexuality.



2022 Blessing of the Animals

Where To Find Us

Sunday Worship Celebration:

Sundays at 9:30 AM in-person and on Zoom.

Monthly Small Group Meetings:

Healing Prayer Team, Community Health Action Team, Stewardship, Ruth's Circle

With the Community:

First Monday Dine & Connect, weekly Shelter Meals, Weekly usage of the gym by local teams

Our Mission Statement

Twin Towers United Methodist Church is a community called to be conduits of healing and justice. positively impacting the last and the least in our neighborhood and beyond, as we work to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Greetings from the Pastor

Rev. Akesa Po•oi Fakava



Welcome Siblings in the Beloved Community of Christ! As we honor and celebrate what God has done through the community at Twin Towers United Methodist Church over the past 170 years, we do so with hearts of gratitude. We remember the many trials, triumphs and lessons we have endured by God's grace, and we honor the sacred connections that we have prayed with, toiled over and served unselfishly for nearly two centuries!

Yes, we look to the past with a deep sense of God's presence but let us look ahead boldly at the opportunities before us and work to realize our vision of an inclusive and loving future through healing and justice for all in the service and way of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The theme for this celebration reflects the work and hopes of Twin Towers in Following Jesus, Thriving in Community, and Healing the World.

Greetings from the Lay Leader

Dr. Ien Tellier



Many thanks to each of you for joining Twin Towers United Methodist Church in the celebration of 170 years of spiritual devotion and growth. support and encouragement of one another. and commitment to service in Alameda and the world beyond. As a congregation. we have been called to a ministry of healing- healing of our bodies. minds and hearts; healing of our relationships with God. one another. other congregations. and our community; healing those in need. those who differ from us. and those who have fled their homes and countries; and healing of the environment. climate. and world. In my role as Lay Leader. I welcome you to join us in being healed and helping others and our world heal through good works. prayer. and seeking justice for all.

Greetings from the 170th Steering Committee

Welcome to our 170th Anniversary Celebration!

Journeying together, we've come to understand that our identity as modern Christians is grounded in our ability to care. In order to deepen and expand our capacity to care for our neighbors and world, we agreed on our theme, which leads us to Following Jesus, Thriving in Community and Healing the World.

We believe that following Jesus, thriving in community and healing the world can move from theory to reality when we are anchored in the example of Jesus Christ, the original culture change agent that liberated us from the slavery of sin and suffering.

Today, we live through and bear witness to the dawn of new pandemics of loneliness, lovelessness, and racism along with the worsening trifecta of houselessness, inflation, and economic crises. In response, we've emerged as a community that seeks to be conduits of God's healing and justice in this neighborhood and beyond, positively impacting the last and the least, as we work to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We hope Twin Towers United Methodist Church is a community where all can thrive and heal wounds within oneself and in places we need, yet least expect. This is why we, as a community, focus our work of following Jesus, thriving in community and healing the world on feeding, clothing, housing, connecting, listening, loving, and praying.

**170 years of faithful service and 170 years to
come!**

Your 170th Anniversary Steering Committee
Pastor Akesa Po'oi Fakava, Patty Yamashita,
Ysrael Quezon, Stacy Sahagun,
Sophia Faaland, and Tiffany Ahrens

Greetings from the Church Council

"The church is not the building...a steeple...
the church is a people."
United Methodist Hymnal 558

170 years from now, Alameda will bear little resemblance to the City we know today. Aside from unique histories, cities will be indistinguishable from each other as technology, climate change, population migration, economic equality and the transformation of Capitalism will evolve the social structures we see today.

Our **prayer** is that we will still have a habitable planet.

Our **hope** is that our building will remain as a historical landmark, and that we will be active in healing and transforming the world in ways that we can't even imagine now.

Our **blessing** for the community at Twin Towers UMC, is that all will experience the joy of following Jesus, thriving in and building community, and healing the world. That we become faithful stewards of time, talent, resources, and emerging technologies that shall inform growing the physical sanctuary at 1411 Oak St, and most especially the sanctuary within every One that comes through our doors.

May they know we are Christians by
our love, service, and faith.

Twin Towers UMC 2023 Church Council

Pastor Akesa Po'oi Fakava, Deacon Mike Friedrich,
Deacon Judith Pruess-Mellow, Ysrael Quezon (Chair)
Cristina Quezon (SPRC), Fred Fielding (Finance)
Evelyn Tigas (Treasurer), Patty Yamashita (BOT)
Jen Tellier (Lay Leader)

Opportunities to Engage

Our faith in God and history grounds who we are, what we believe in, and what actions we have taken to uphold our values. From our past to the present, we recognize our legacy is integral to our identity. To make our history relevant, we choose to continue following our mission: to be a community called to be conduits of healing and justice, positively impacting the last and least in our neighborhood and beyond as we work to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. To continue the spirit of Twin Towers United Methodist Church's involvement in community activism, we invite you to participate with us in serving our neighbors.

Alameda Basketball Diehards
Alameda Food Bank
Alameda Vipers Basketball Club
All Good Living Foundation
American Red Cross
Building Futures
Dine & Connect
Village of Love



Acknowledgements

Thank you to our partners and vendors whose gifts, time and talents have blessed Twin Towers United Methodist Church's 170th Anniversary Celebration

Join us in celebrating them by supporting their work and business.



www.bayareamusicproject.org



www.bigcitydap.com



Chef Diego Morales
Catering and Private Events
www.instagram.com/la_cocinadediego



Timena Moli
Videographer and Photographer
www.instagram.com/cimenatographer



Donna Fado Ivery
Minister, Artist and Author
Art of Healing Workshop Facilitator
www.adventuresinhealing.com

Special thanks to Sophia Faaland, the editor of this booklet, for her diligent research and storytelling.

Thriving in Community

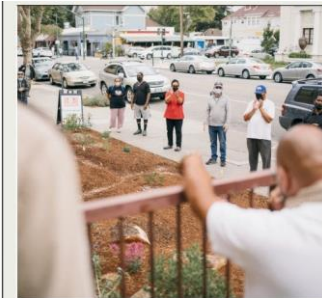


Celebrating Together



Lifelong Friends

Lillian Taddei and Verne Stevens



***Dine & Connect
Circle of Gratitude***



Making New Memories

Christmas Caroling with
Jack Stevens



Thriving Together

Celebrating Mary Scott's 700th Birthday



Dine & Connect



Easter 2023

Thriving in Community



Small Group Meetings

Ruth's Circle Lunch - 2023



Consecration of the Healing Space2023



Supporting our Young People



Strengthening Connections



Living Our Witness during the Global Pandemic



Welcoming New Members

Introduction to Our History

The following pages document the history of Twin Towers United Methodist Church. The church, as we know it today, is derived from the combination of two roots: the First Methodist Church and the Santa Clara Methodist Church.

The following history details all three churches, their relationships to one another, and memories from current members of Twin Towers United Methodist Church. These memories were gathered into quotes by a series of oral history interviews conducted in the sanctuary of Twin Towers United Methodist Church. Over the course of three days, sixteen members were interviewed by audio recording thanks to Sophia Faaland, or film, courtesy of videographer Timena Moli.

All photos of newspaper clippings are from the Alameda Free Library.

Pastors of Twin Towers United Methodist Church

Rev. Robert Keller & Rev. Dr. Richard Stinson (1985-1989)

Rev. Robert Keller (1989-1995)

Rev. Mark Bollwinkel (1995-1999)

Rev. Donna Wood (1999-2003)

Rev. Pamela Kurtz (2003-2008)

Rev. Dr. Hubert Ivery (2008-2012)

Rev. Donald Cunningham (2012-2014)

Rev. Dr. Richard Stinson (2014-2018)

Rev. Emily Lin (2018-2022)

Rev. Akesa **Po'oi** Fakava (2022-Present)

We are blessed to be the home church for
and in connection with the following
retired clergy:

Rev. Donald Cunningham, Pastor Emeritus

Rev. Mike Friedrich

Rev. Robert Hardman

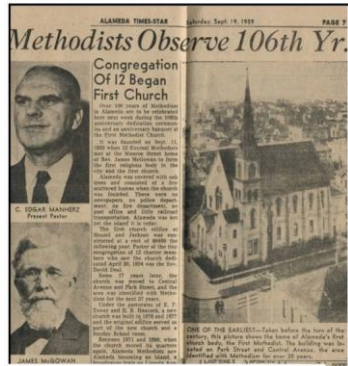
Rev. Dr. Judith Pruess-Mellow

Rev. Michael Voshii



History of the First Methodist Church

In 1853, twelve people gathered to form the Encinal Methodist Church*. According to the Alameda-Times Star, the church was "founded on September 11th, 1853 when the Encinal Methodists met at the home of the local

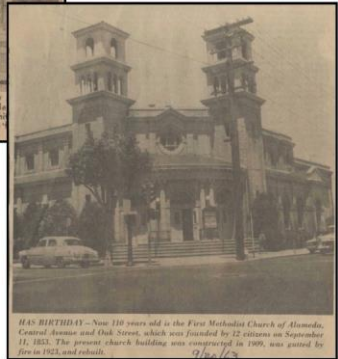
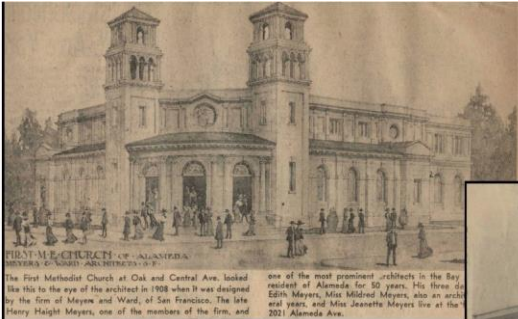


preacher James McGowan to form the first congregation," on Monroe Street. The small congregation continued to meet on Monroe Street, in a tent, until 1854. The first building of the First Methodist Church (FMC) was erected on the corner of Mound and Jackson Street. The land was donated by Bishop William Taylor, and consecrated by Bishop Mathew Simpson. The original structure cost \$6400.

Per the Alameda Museum Quarterly, the style of this building was Gothic, with its "iconic steeple to the skyline, imparting a sense of established tradition to the gold rush settlement". The Quarterly also states "With the arrival of the railroad in 1864, Park Street became the new center of population. in 1871, the Methodists moved their building to the corner of Park and Central where a larger edifice went up five years later."

**The FMC formed soon after the California Gold Rush in 1849, when the population of Alameda was growing rapidly. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "Between 1849 and 1855, thousands of aspiring miners, entrepreneurs, and their families made the arduous land and sea journey to California." Coming into contact with this new influx of people were the Muwekma Oh-one people, who are native to the East Bay Area.*

History of the First Methodist Church

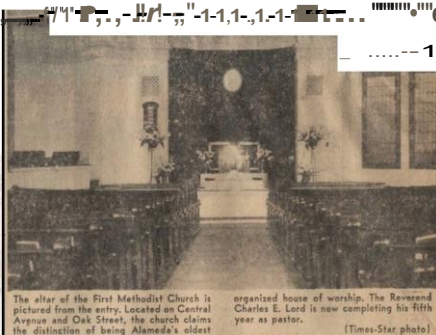


In 1908, the church relocated to its final

location, on the corner of Central and Oak Street. During this year, the San Francisco architecture firm,

Meyers and Ward, developed the building design titled 'Twin Towers'.

In 1923, the Fellowship Hall was erected and shortly thereafter, a spectacular fire engulfed the structure leaving the walls standing and Memorial Windows undamaged. The building was rebuilt and dedicated on April 20, 1924. In 1970, the Education Wing was remodeled and included Sunday School classrooms, nursery, pastor's study, office and a large meeting room which are still used to this day.



...the church claims the distinction of being Alameda's oldest organized house of worship," - Alameda Times-Star

Memories and Statements from Members



I'm very proud of our pastor. She has so much energy, and is so kind. One of the things I think is very special is that every Sunday she acknowledges every child in the church, reads their names, does the same with the youth, and recognizes every one of them.

I think it's very important to support the youth, because they are our future." -**Lillian Taddei** on who she admires



"Members of the Healing Prayer Team are myself, Jen Tellier, Pastor Akesa, Donna Wong, Yan Wang, Joyce Simmonds, and Dean Larwood. And then we started a book study called 'Healing the Sick' about five months ago. We have some new members for that study: Mary Scott, Linda Benson, and Jen's cousin from New York, Audrey Gavin

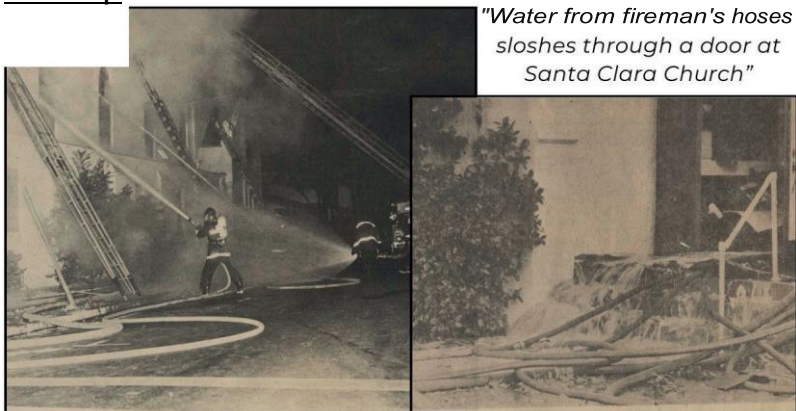
We hope to be able to do some actual healing and, for sure, healing prayer for people who request it. We have fixed up a healing space in the Cunningham room. Our vision, now that we have that special space, is that somebody would ask us for prayer, or we'd hear a prayer request during the service, and then afterwards we would go into the healing prayer space...and pray for the person." -**Deacon Judith Pruess-Mellow** on her activity in the Healing Prayer Team

History of the Santa Clara Methodist Church

During the Great Depression, the church struggled to pay off the loan from the Board of Missions and Church Extension. In 1944, during the pastorate of Rev. Homer Bodley, the church celebrated full repayment of the loan.

In 1940, the Alameda Naval Station was established, and the island saw another wave of population increase. With the new Naval Station, navy families from across the country came to Alameda. As a result, new families joined the Santa Clara Methodist Church, and the population of young people in the church increased significantly.

On September 22, 1972, the church building was destroyed in an early morning fire. Despite the Alameda Fire Department's efforts to quell the fire the building could not be salvaged from the damage. Following the fire, 16 organizations in Alameda offered space for the congregation to worship.



*"Water from fireman's hoses
sloshes through a door at
Santa Clara Church"*

The congregation decided to utilize the First Methodist Church's Gymnasium on Oak Street for temporary worship services. By 1973, the two congregations merged, forming "Twin Towers United Methodist Church".

Memories and Statements from Members

"It just sort of, went together. It slowly merged together, like two streams converging. As we had meetings, or Sunday School, or UMW, everybody took part and merged together. There was no left and right, it was just together." - **Joanne Gibson** on her memory of the First Methodist Church and Santa Clara Methodist Church merger



"The more I read about the Wesleyan tradition, and more materials on the Methodist Church, it did align with what I thought. That they were not afraid to put women in the pulpit...that women had a place in the church. If you look at this church, the driving force is really the women."

-**Patricia "Patty" Yamashita** on learning more about United Methodists

"Just keep showing up and bring some relatives, even children. We need all the noise we can get around here. Us older folks don't make as much noise anymore. Come to a service and look around." -**David Davis** on advice he has for people interested in joining



History of Twin Towers United Methodist Church



Twin Towers United Methodist Church (TTUMC) originally began in 1974, when the FMC and the **SCMC** merged. A celebratory ceremony was held in the Central Avenue and Oak Street church. Some people who joined the celebration were Bishop R. Marvin Stuart, Dr. John V. Moore, and Pastors Darrel Mccorkell, Wilton Vincent, and Dick Pitcher. During the ceremony, Buford Fisher presented the history of the FMC, and Ray Barbour presented the box from



the SCMC. This box was salvaged from the 1972 fire that led to the demolition of the SCMC. Several items were inside: the church directory and membership lists of 1929, the 1928 California-Nevada Annual Conference minutes announcing building plans for the Alameda church, copies of newsletters of the Men's Club and Epworth League, and various copies of the the Alameda Times-Star.

One of the first outreach programs of the TTUMC was the "Cottage Plan", which began in February, 1974. This was a series of informational meetings in the homes of church members to encourage people to join Twin Towers, and learn more about the church's activities.

History of Twin Towers United Methodist Church



The leaders of the Cottage Plan were Mr. Williams, John Foley, Arlene Tennant, Jack Stephens, Dorothy Ibarol le, Bonnie Hori beck, Jerry Lemmon, and Richard Lenhart.

In 1977, the Alameda Food Bank began in a closet housed in the Twin Towers church. Started by Rev. John Foley, the Food Bank was initially a small program with the goal of feeding food insecure members of Alameda. Collaborating with his wife Pat, they started the "Bay-Eagle Community Garden" in the lot that was previously occupied by the Santa Clara Methodist Church. By 1980, Margaret Torreano was a notable



Waiting for sunshine are these enthusiasts for the Bay-Eagle Community Garden. Everything is set for planting to begin... when and if the rain gives people a chance. Left to right here are Jim Wilson, Rev. John Foley, Lynn Masten and Jesus Loal.

...!!!!!!! me m be r in the organization, helping many customers and connecting them to vital resources. The closet in **Twin Towers** was used as a distribution center.

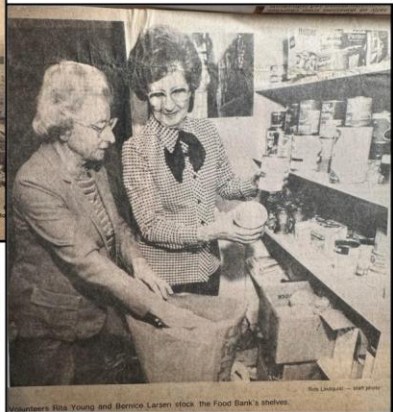
In 2003, the 150th anniversary was celebrated in the church on the corner of Central Avenue and Oak Street. Some community activities were highlighted in the celebration: participation in

History of Twin Towers United Methodist Church

Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels, and the 13 year-long service of providing weekly evening meals to the Midway Shelter in Alameda. In addition, a booklet featuring the history of the church, and anecdotes from church members was made available to the public.



The Food Bank Closet at Twin Towers

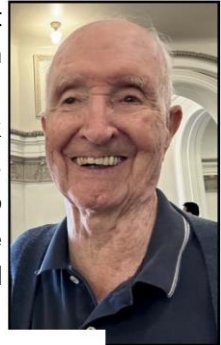


The latest confirmation class was held on May **17th, 2015.** The confirmation program was coordinated by the Youth Group leader, Fred Fielding, and featured several meetings of discussion on faith, practice of Methodist principles, and relationship to the congregation. Members of this confirmation class were: Allison Be, Stacy Sahagun, Nick King, Mia Wettegren, Sam Wettegren, Stefan Faaland, Sophia Faaland, Denniel Fiorita, Athena Bautista, and Aileen "Rosie" Saxton. After the confirmation ceremony, a luncheon was held in the gymnasium.



Memories and Statements from Members

"I would say come in and see what we're about. We're not going to push ourselves on you, but we're going to let you see what we are. And I think you would enjoy what the Methodists have to offer. If you don't happen to be of that faith, that's fine. We have people here from other faiths, and people who



converted over to our faith. Come in and listen to what the pastor has to say, and see how the people interact with each other: with love, kindness, and caring for each other. Then the next thing you know, you'll be part of the congregation." **-Jim McGrogan** on what message he has to offer to people interested in joining

"It's a lot. Especially when different members come and go...and that's actually the trend in this church. Even before the first time I joined, it was already diverse. We have Laotian, Filipino, African-Americans visiting...it's very diverse. And, even if you're new here, we actually try to engage our guests and visitors and ask them 'Hey, join us in coffee hour.'"



-Cristina Quezon on some ways that Twin Towers is unique



Facility History of Twin Towers United Methodist Church

In 1883, the lot on the corner of Central and Oak Street was purchased for the FMC. 15 years later, in 1898, the First Methodist Church moved to Central and Oak from its Park Street and Central Avenue location.

The church was erected in 1908, organized by Rev. Willsie M. Martin of the FMC. A year later, Ford Brothers Glass Co. was commissioned to create the iconic stained glass windows for \$2500.00.

In 1856, the First Methodist Church purchased a bell that was cast in Boston, Massachusetts. It then traveled in a Clipper ship around Cape Horn of South America, and was later installed in the FMC on Jackson and Mound Street. Today, the bell is housed in one of the towers.

In 1923, after the dedication of Twin Towers United Methodist Church, the Gymnasium facing Central Avenue was erected. The Gymnasium was built next to the sanctuary. This facility, along with the church, did not have any major difficulties until August, when a fire broke out in the middle of the night. This caused \$5700.00 worth of damage to the building (roughly \$101,900 in today's money, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics). The Alameda Fire Department salvaged the sanctuary, and the Memorial Windows.

On September 14, 1997, the new audio-recorded compact disc system was dedicated to replace the bells. The recorded sound of chimes came from Chime Master Systems in Ohio, which used a carillon size group of 53 bells to record.

Facility History of Twin Towers United Methodist Church

In 2016, the sanctuary was refurbished from top to bottom restoring the character of the original design. In July 2020, donations by Mary R. Tarpley and Clara Sigmon funded the replacing of the original bells with the first carillon. Mary R. Tarpley also donated the Baby Grand Piano that is housed in the sanctuary in memoriam of longtime member, Pat Williams.

Since that time, a partnership with Embrace Church has resulted in technological upgrades that allow the church to move to a paperless format, and enables online live streaming for community members. This year, the roof of the church and education and office wing was replaced thanks to the generosity of the Mary Tarpley and Imelda Merlin estates. The gym floors were also refinished and repainted to accommodate basketball and pickleball.



*The Original
Gymnasium*

*The Refinished
Gymnasium*



Memories and Statements from Members



"One thing that makes me feel really good about this church is that I've given 20 scholarships to graduating high school students. And what's nice is that some of them have come back and helped work for the

church. I'll say, 'I remember you!' And there's no need for them to come back after their time in the youth group has passed. They decide to." - **Doug MacIntosh** on his favorite memory of Twin Towers



"The first one was called Stephen Ministry. Jen Tellier I went off to be trained in this program to be Stephen leaders, and then we recruited about ten Stephen ministers in our church. That program ran for several years...Then, ten years ago, we started the

Reconciling Ministry. A flag up front represents the Reconciling Ministry, to assure that gay and lesbian people are welcome in our congregation. This started in 2013." -**Steve Carner** on his favorite memories at Twin Towers

"I just know that if they come here, somehow the Holy Spirit will guide them, and they will know that this is the place...that they can find and belong to Christian life...I think that the ability to belong to Christian community is so special.



And I hope everyone who wants to know more about the Christian life will come. They will be very blessed to be here." -**Mary Scott** on a message she has for new members

**TWIN TOWERS
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

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**www.twintowersumc.org
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transformation of the world.*

