

Free Methodist Church of Santa Barbara
State of the Ministry: April 14, 2024
Rev. Colleen Hurley-Bates, Completing 8 Years as Lead Pastor

“I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you’re joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can’t produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is—when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.” (John 15:5-8, The Message)

This has been a year of abiding in the Vine for us in many ways. Many of you have told me how you are experiencing the Spirit among us in abundance. We are seeing new people coming to faith, believers being transformed in Christ, and many being led to reach out to their neighbors in new ways through the love of God. We have new babies being born! We are blessed with many young people. Cliff Drive children’s programs are full and we are experiencing growth at Senior Lunch. There was gracious provision for our end of year giving. This translates to us as LIFE. God is bringing a beautiful harvest in this season and we are grateful. All praise and glory to the Lord.

Highlights from last year:

- A Talent Show sponsored by Young Adults. SO fun!
- Our Newly elected Bishop Kenny Martin coming to minister to our leaders and preach to us.
- A beautiful Women’s Retreat with sisters from Light and Life West & Bethel House
- Kaylee Dancg, Elyse Wagner, Kylie Carter, and Hannah Denney as our interns.
- Missionaries we welcomed: Leons, Winslows, Gallers, Wes White, Shattenbergs.
- Isaiah on Sunday mornings! Special choirs on holidays!
- Jenny Yznaga’s retirement as CDCC Director and welcoming Delanie Sabac as our new one.
- Beautiful baptisms of children, babies, and adults!

Part of life is sorrow and in this season, we have been experiencing much of this as well. We are lamenting the pain of this world where there is much war, fear, division, hatred, disease, loss, injustice, and sorrow. In this, we are clinging to the cross and learning to die to ourselves as we find our lives in Christ. We are reminded in this how God is calling us to resilience and faith and more dependence on His word and presence. As we have attempted to honor and know Jesus, we will continue to be faithful and listen to the leading of the Spirit as the Kingdom of God is unveiled in our city, nation, and world.

Personally, I am honored to be writing my 8th report as your Lead Pastor and 29th overall. I love serving Jesus with you and am excited for how His love is bringing growth to our lives and our larger community. I am also excited to announce that my doctoral project (That We May Be One: Unifying as the Body of Christ in a Divided World) has been approved and I have completed all the requirements for my Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Spiritual Formation at Portland Seminary, which is the culmination of three years of work! Thank you for the time (and the books) you graciously gave me, as I have experienced such a deepening in my mind and soul through the gift of this degree.

“I’ve loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you’ll remain intimately at home in my love. That’s what I’ve done—kept my Father’s commands and made myself at home in his love. I’ve told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you.” (John 15:9-10, The Message)

FMC Year	Worship	Sunday School	Bible Studies	Membership	Total Income*
2016	441	105	305	341	\$1,108,646
2017	364	128	307	335	\$1,054,739
2018	398	118	350	325	\$1,125,232
2019	372	171	325	304	\$1,020,387
2020	380 [†]	—	270	300	\$967,142
2021	396 [†]	26	275	300	\$1,190,096
2022	385 [†]	34	286	302	\$1,062,686
2023	397 [†]	25	311	317	\$1,094,928
CDCC Year**	Children	Seniors	Counseling	Total Helped	Total Income
2016	102	78	—	180	\$705,224
2017	196	97	—	293	\$711,833
2018	203	158	90	451	\$738,678
2019	153	140	204	497	\$778,936
2020	141	130	254	525	\$712,602
2021	156	130	230	516	\$933,253
2022	158	135	200	493	\$1,091,528
2023	162	140	—	302	\$1,047,718

* This amount reflects money given both to budgeted items and to other ministries through our church.

** Since 2017, the CDCC number represents the total number of people served in the various ministries.

† Attendance numbers were derived from in-person attendance and average viewers of YouTube service.