



## **Weekly Message**

Dear Friend,

Marcus, a 40-year-old man from the LGBTQIA+ community, has faced more than his share of challenges. Struggling with severe mental health issues and addiction, his life was deeply intertwined with his mother's—she managed his finances and provided constant support. Her sudden passing devastated him, leaving him homeless, isolated, and overwhelmed. Without her, Marcus' codependency and lack of life skills became glaring obstacles.

Marcus' car became both his home and his lifeline, allowing him to work part-time for Uber Eats, but even that was on the brink of being repossessed. But when Marcus connected with Friends In Deed through an LA-HOP referral, everything began to change. Our Street Outreach and Housing Team helped prevent his car from being repossessed. This small but crucial step allowed Marcus to keep working and maintain a semblance of stability. Over time, with the guidance of our MSW intern and other support staff, Marcus developed critical life skills like budgeting and scheduling. He also received mental health support, substance abuse counseling, and shelter through the Pathways program while waiting for permanent housing.

Today, Marcus is thriving in his new home. He continues to make strides in his recovery, attending therapy and maintaining his sobriety. With his car secure and his debts reduced, he's working towards greater independence and also healing from the loss of his mother. Marcus's journey is a testament to the power of compassion, patience, and comprehensive support in transforming lives.



*Suzanne Lee*



*Rev. Amy Aitken*

I am pleased to share that we have two new members joining our Board of Directors: Suzanne Lee and Rev. Amy Aitken. We are very excited for them to bring their unique experience to the leadership of Friends In Deed. Here is a bit about them from the bios they shared.

Suzanne is a graduate from USC. She worked as a paralegal and is a former board member of the Santa Barbara Legal Aid Foundation. After a series of life-threatening medical events and a death depleted her funds, Suzanne landed in a homeless situation. While she lived in her car at Trinity Lutheran Church's Safe Parking Program, Suzanne became the face of SPP, speaking publicly in favor of its role in serving the unhoused. She shared her story with the Pasadena City Council, the Pasadena Planning Commission, as well as the Pasadena Planning and Community Development Department. Suzanne is a former FID client and was recently housed in Pasadena. As a community member with lived experience, Suzanne is certainly a viable and committed candidate for the FID Board of Directors.

Pastor Amy began her ministry at Pasadena First United Methodist Church in July, 2021. A native of Southern California, Pastor Amy attended high school and college in California before moving to Atlanta to earn her Master's in Divinity from Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and later earned a Doctor of Ministry at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC. She was ordained in 1997 and has served United Methodist Churches in Ventura, Granada Hills, Long Beach, Costa Mesa, and Redondo Beach. Pastor Amy is passionate about connecting her Christian faith to acts of compassion, service, and community-building.

*(As shared on the FUMC website):*

Favorite Food: Indian and Pizza

Favorite TV Show: Ted Lasso

Favorite Place to Visit: Kenya

Favorite Bible Verse: Micah 6:8: "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your

God?"



Yesterday, I had the opportunity to welcome Rep. Judy Chu to the Food Pantry. Her staff reached out to me as the Congresswoman wanted to come and talk about potential cuts to two key federal programs that directly affect many of our clients and low-income families: SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and Medicaid. I recorded a live [podcast](#) while her staff filmed our conversation for Instagram.

Finally, next Tuesday is our annual [Giving Day](#)! We hope you will take this opportunity to contribute any amount, as the goal is 225 donors on 2/25/25—when we reach that goal, we will unlock a very generous challenge grant of \$20,000 from the Lawrence A. Appley Foundation. Thank you for supporting us!

Blessings and have a lovely weekend,  
Rabbi Joshua



**We can only operate with your help!**

Donate today to support our community!

Forever Friends Legacy Society

## Giving Day is Tuesday!

Join us for Giving Day next week!

Our goal: 225 donors in one day to fuel food, shelter, and resources for those in need. And the best part? The Lawrence A. Appley Foundation will donate an additional \$20,000 when we reach our goal! **Let's make it happen together.**

[Learn More.](#)



## New Podcast Episode



### Live Conversation with Rep. Judy Chu: Potential Cuts to SNAP and Medicaid

On this special episode, Rabbi Joshua welcomes Congresswoman Judy Chu (CA-28) to the Food Pantry, after her office reached out about coming to talk about potential federal funding cuts to SNAP and Medicaid...[Listen Now.](#)

EPISODE 2

### New Episode

Live Conversation with Rep. Judy Chu

FEB 21



5:11

-0:55

# Get Social



**A huge thank you to United Way of Greater Los Angeles for the \$25,000 donation supporting our fire impact relief efforts!**

We are working hard to support those in our Friends in Deed community who are struggling due to losses caused by the Eaton fire, and we are incredibly grateful to know that we are not working alone...[Read more.](#)



**Keeping our community warm!**

Big thanks to the Altadena Team Leadership Council for donating warm socks, jackets, and clothes to our guests...[Read more.](#)

**Our Bad Weather Shelter wouldn't be possible without the kindness, dedication, and hard work of our amazing volunteers**

Whether you're setting up, serving meals, offering a warm smile, or ensuring everyone has a safe place to rest, YOU make all the difference...[Read more.](#)



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## News and Events

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### Bad Weather Shelter

The Bad Weather Shelter is open at Trinity Lutheran Church on a weather-activated basis from January 9th through April 30th.

[View more information on our website.](#)



### EmpowerHER: Lifting Up Women, Wellness, and Creative Expression

In honor of Women's History Month in March, Friends In Deed is excited to present EmpowerHER, a three-week event series designed to celebrate and support women through wellness, creativity, and community.

[Learn More.](#)

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# 2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

**FID Giving Day: February 25**  
*Online*

**EmpowerHER: March**  
*March 15: Wellness Workshop*  
*March 18: Books & Bouquets*  
*March 25: Trivia Night*

**Mayor's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast: May 1**  
*Pasadena Convention Center*

**Golfing for Good: June 9**  
*Brookside Golf Club*

**Stories from the Street: June**  
*One Colorado*

**Cooking for a Cause: September**  
*Agnes Restaurant and Cheesery*

*\*Event dates are subject to change\**

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[www.friendsindeedpas.org](http://www.friendsindeedpas.org)

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**Friends In Deed** is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. We embrace and celebrate the spectrum of our employees', volunteers', and clients' ages, color, ability or disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, neurodiversity, and other characteristics that make our employees, volunteers, and clients unique.

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Friends In Deed | 444 E. Washington Blvd. | Pasadena, CA 91104 US

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